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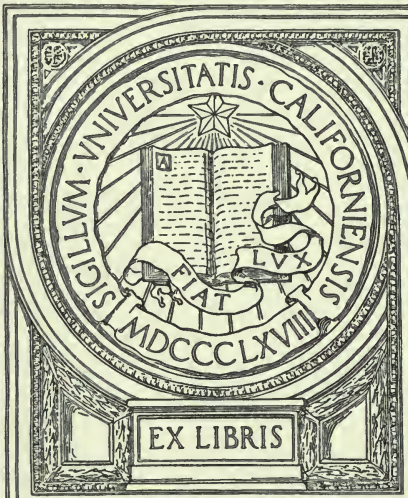
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WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

OR

PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.

"YE SHALL KNOW THEM BY THEIR FRUITS."

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:
JAMES RIDGWAY, PICCADILLY.
1844.

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EXCHANGE

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WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

OR

PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.

Present Prospects.

On the 8th of last July, Sir James Graham, the Cabinet Minister, charged most especially with the safety and domestic peace of the three kingdoms, declared in his place in Parliament, "We are "arrived at no ordinary crisis. The national safety, "as well as our position in the scale of the nations "of the world, is at hazard."

Subsequent events have confirmed instead of weakening this most humiliating confession. In Ireland rebellion still hangs suspended by a thread, and in England want of employment and consequent pauperism are yearly increasing, incendiarism is reviving, leagues and counter-associations are formed or forming; class is arrayed against class, and already we have had two insurrections within

two years. With such prospects before and around us, it behoves the country to pause and consider well before it allows itself to be committed in the ensuing session of Parliament to proceedings which, instead of diminishing, may add to the hazards to which the national safety is thus confessedly reduced. A large reserve force of pensioners was granted last session, and there are indications that this year our military forces at home may be increased, that the militia will be called out or prepared, and that the laws, for what is officially called the preservation of order, will be made more stringent and severe. Now, before these and other similar demands are made, let us examine the policy we have lately been pursuing, in order to ascertain whether it is in itself most conducive to public order and contentment, or whether it may not, in some degree, be provocative of the very disorders it is asking for additional powers to quell. But, to pursue this enquiry with profit, we must mark first what have been the cause and the course of the events and proceedings that have led to our present dangerous state of affairs,—what are the directing tendencies and wants of the present times, and how far they are in accordance with the principles and practices of one or other of the two great parties, which, under various sectional names, have long divided, and alternately or mutually directed public opinion and affairs in this country. This will lead us a little further back, and indeed the whole subject requires much

more time and space than the brief sketch we are about to submit, can pretend to. All, therefore, that we now propose is by a hasty and necessarily imperfect review of comparatively recent transactions to awaken attention and point out subjects for candid and earnest consideration, by which it is hoped the public may, in this critical state of affairs, be enabled to judge for itself what policy of government, and which code of principles are best adapted in the present day to secure the tranquillity, the concord, and the prosperity of the British Empire, which our rulers tell us is now "at hazard." In short, what is to be done?

Principles and Proceedings of former Whig and Tory Governments.

It will be useful first to distinguish the characteristics of the two great parties and principles of government, which divide the suffrages of the country. But it would be mere sophistry to fix the policy of either party, to any one epoch, and then pedantically require that it should follow its very letter at widely remote times, and under totally different circumstances. This is the folly or the hypocrisy of those who prate of being modern-antique Somers-Whigs, or refurbished Bolingbroke-Tories. No! all that common sense and honesty

require, is that a party should continue to apply to the rising exigencies of the times in which it finds itself, the practical spirit of those principles upon which it rests. Sufficient unto the day is the application thereof.

Now we take the leading tendencies of Whigs and Tories to be Democracy and Aristocracy, both however subject always to Monarchy. Not that we hold Whigs to be democrats, or Tories upholders of despotism; but we take, that your Whig, looking to the gradual approximation to perfectibility in the human race, regards Democracy as the ultimate best social institution for mankind, when arrived at a remote stage of great moral advancement; and he, therefore, promotes all those political reforms and extensions of popular rights which tend towards it, in so far, and no farther, than as they are on a par with the moral and social advancement of the people to whom and for whom they are applied. And, as a necessary consequence, he advocates their moral and social instruction. This we hold to be the true basis of Whiggism. On the other hand Tories, looking on Aristocracy, or the rule by privileged classes, as the best possible modification of regal government, object to all changes that tend to lessen their authority, however much required by the advanced state of civilization out of which they arise; and they do resist them, until the people, taking advantage of adventitious circumstances, call for them with a voice

and an accord that cannot be refused. Then, finding the immediate danger of further resistance greater than the prospective danger of the right demanded, the Tory gives way,—concedes. But while thus opposed to the advance of the political liberty or power of the people, he is willing to bestow on them, so long as they are submissive, all the protection and advantages of easy government and physical enjoyment. The basis of his principles is, keep things as they are,—avoid all change, whether for better or for worse, until forced. The one party seems best adapted for administrative, the other for progressive, times: the one looks to the Lords, the other to the Commons. These are the dry, abstract characteristics of the two parties; but, in a country like this, where independence of opinion and action have so long existed, they will necessarily suffer infinite modifications, which now leaning to one side, now to the other; give the preponderance, now to Whig, now to Tory. Where resistance to all change has long existed, patience, exhausted, will lean to the side of the Whigs; where change has been going on too rapidly, alarm, excited, will strengthen the Tories; where change has been abruptly checked, disappointment, vexed, will overthrow or overrule those who have checked it. A very little reflection will apply these observations to recent and earlier times.

Thus the old Whig party wore itself out during the reigns of the two first Georges. Having bravely

resisted the Stuarts, it corrupted itself by long possession of power; and, doing nothing for the advancement of the people, it fell by dereliction of its own first principles. Governing as Tories, it was necessarily and justly displaced by Tories. Then, opening with Wilkes, and ending with O'Connell, began the long Tory rule of resistance to all reforms and extensions of popular rights. We find them opposing concession to the American discontents and losing America,—opposing the independence of the Irish parliament,—opposing the reform of government in France in 1793, and so waging a twenty years' continental war. They opposed the emancipation of the Catholics in all the stages of their release from the penal code,—they opposed the abolition of the slave trade and of slavery,—they defended all the severities of our criminal law,—they resisted reductions of taxation,—they discountenanced the education of the people, and set their faces and their votes against all dissent in religious matters,—and, from the first declaration of Lord Chatham to the last speech of Lord Grey, they opposed all parliamentary reform. A long war, the alarm created by the atrocities of the French revolution, and great parliamentary influence, enabled them to offer a long protracted resistance, but time, peace, and public opinion carried every one of these, and other great questions, against them.

In 1827, this great resisting party at length broke

up. For some while there had been indications of a liberal tendency amongst many of its most intelligent leaders. Attempting to rule on the principles of their opponents, they undermined their own power, by offending the mass of their supporters; and on the death of Lord Liverpool, when Mr. Canning was placed at the head of affairs, the discontent broke out. The old Tories, with Sir Robert Peel and the Duke of Wellington at their head, seceded,—protesting they could not serve under a Government, whose chief was favourable to the emancipation of the Catholics. Ireland was Sir Robert Peel's difficulty then as now. Mr. Canning, therefore, moving with the great middle party, which had now changed from modified Toryism, to modified Whiggism, allied himself with the Whigs, and would have carried out an enlightened policy, but his premature death, and the persevering opposition of his former colleagues, broke up his administration. For the fluent incapacity of Lord Ripon who succeeded him for a few months, had no strength to contend with difficulties. He retired frightened at the sound himself had not even made; and the old Tories returned, but not entire. The Duke of Wellington and Peel were still at their head, but they managed to weed some of their Ultras, and to win back the greater part of the Canningites, together with some loose Whigs: and thus was formed the first of the new school of resistance, by means of compromise Governments.

The Duke of Wellington was at its head; his administration was honest, but his policy was wretched. He entirely misunderstood public opinion at home, and strange to say, our foreign policy was never so little respected or so unsuccessful. We were once more at the heels of the Holy alliance; yet Russia, not the less, advanced to Adrianople, and seized the keys of the Dardanelles; while Dom Miguel, instructed by Austria, laughed at us in Portugal, and plundered our merchants. The unhappy Spanish patriots from Terceira, were driven from our shores at Plymouth, to conciliate Spanish despotism, and to frustrate English sympathies. For discontent was increasing; petitions for Parliamentary and other needful Reforms were presented, only to be unheeded; and the Roman Catholics saw plainly there was no hope for emancipation, but from increased agitation.

The more liberal members of the Cabinet, the Canningites, cheated of their expectation of a liberal policy, retired on the East Retford question. And the old Tory Anti-Catholic party under the command of the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel, was left to measure its strength with public opinion. They were beaten and driven from pillar to post, refusing, conceding, evading, repressing, exciting, resigning,—there has seldom been such a no-government as that which existed from 1828 to 1830.

That which Mr. Canning and the liberal party might have granted with honour, and which would from them have been received with gratitude, was wrung from the Duke of Wellington and the Tories, on the bitterest and most dangerous, not to say, degrading, compulsion. Not one of those ministers who had hitherto opposed Catholic Emancipation, and now voted for it, pretended that he did so upon conviction of its abstract justice or utility; on the contrary, one and all, declared they submitted to it only as to the lesser evil, and to avoid hideous consequences in Ireland and in the army, to which they darkly alluded. One victory of Agitation so won, paved the way for other, and more dangerous attempts. Swing lit his fires in England threatening a servile war, and in Ireland within less than a year after this humiliation of the Government, the Repeal agitation commenced. In December 1829, Mr. O'Connell at Clondalken, stated his intention to form a Repeal society, and in the following month he first organized it, under the name of the Parliamentary Intelligence Office to promote the Repeal of the Union. Neither the Duke of Northumberland at Dublin, nor the government in England, so recently vanquished, had the energy or the moral strength to check in its weak bud this first systematic agitation of Repeal. In fact the Government was paralyzed; it had deserted its leading principles, and was now doggedly contending, now quibbling and equivocating on Penryn and

East Retford, until it closed its ignominious career, with the Duke of Wellington's blistering declaration, that the wit of man could not devise a more perfect form of Representative Government than the Rotten borough nomination system. This wise saw and modern instance, was its death-song. The Tories were out within a fortnight after its utterance; and Lord Grey and the Whigs came in.

Thus ended the Duke of Wellington's and Sir Robert Peel's first experiment of an expediency government. It came in with a high character and professed principles, it went out without either the one or the other. Its first principle was to resist Roman Catholic and Protestant Dissent, and it was conquered by both; its next object was to counteract Parliamentary Reform, and it rendered it only the more certain and more extensive.

Do we attribute fraud or want of energy to a Government, which so signally broke faith? On the contrary, we think it shewed both sense and courage in giving way. But it was guilty of an ignorance of public opinion, and blinded by its own party repressive principles it could not comprehend the justice of the claims and rights it opposed. It, therefore, mischievously thwarted and destroyed Mr. Canning's and the Whigs' liberal policy, in order to supersede it by a repressive government against that which manifestly was, and which so soon proved itself to be, too strong for

curbing. This is the blame due to the Government of 1829, and as we pursue our subject we may see cause to repeat the same strictures.

Principles and Performances of the Whig or Reform Governments.

The change of Ministers checked the discontent, and when peace, retrenchment, and reform were heard to be the watchwords of the new Government, there was a truce. Let us see what they will do, was the general cry. For there was no great trust in the Whigs, they were nearly unknown as official men, and their party, since the days of Chatham, has seldom been popular, and shut out for nearly sixty years from all official patronage, they had few opportunities of serving friends and creating clients. The last two generations have, in fact, been fattened and ennobled by the Tories. The people too had of late seen public professions so utterly disregarded, that they naturally put little faith in the Whig promises. They received as so many fine words their theory that it was the duty of all governments to promote the education and self-control of the people, their civil, moral, and religious knowledge, in order to give them more freedom, and to extend that freedom as the privilege of increased and the incitement to increasing knowledge and virtue. But these principles were, nevertheless, steadily applied by the Whigs to the Reform Bill, and

are to be traced in all their other great measures. They found the self-government, the education, and religious restraints of the bulk of the people, and more especially of the middle classes greatly beyond their restricted liberties and privileges; and they sought to adjust this discrepancy by purifying and extending the elective franchise. This was done so liberally, frankly, and impartially, that it won the acclamation of the country, and the Whigs suddenly became abundantly popular. They carried all before them at the elections, and the Reform Bill became the law of the land. Then came their trial. They had to work their new machine and to bring up all the institutions of the country to a level with its extended representative powers. There were some few who did not see the necessity for such adjustment, others who seeing it yet alarmed by the recent struggles for the Reform Bill, were content to advance only a few of our institutions, and to advance those few far less than was necessary. Others, again, were for pushing on too far. Unity of purpose was lost, and in its stead came dissension. Public acclamation fell off, and within two years after the passing of the Reform Bill, the Whigs were losing their popularity.

Then, suddenly, came the second reaction ministry of Sir Robert Peel and the Duke of Wellington, who, with no sufficient constitutional grounds dissolved one Parliament, and continued for three months to hold office in another, although constantly in a minority

from the first day of their opening it to the moment of their resignation. Had they been more successful in the elections, Reform and the Reform Act would have been overthrown or perverted for years; as it was, by the temporary possession of the Government during the elections, and during the divisions amongst the Liberals, they succeeded in thinning the Whig ranks; and Lord Melbourne returned to office with a much reduced majority, yet still notwithstanding this, and the dead weight in the Lords against him, he succeeded in carrying out his many reforms. He followed in the footsteps of his former Government and of Lord Grey's, and history will mark with wonder and applause the great measures which the Whig party carried in less than eleven years' possession of office— measures for the advancement and security of RELIGION, EDUCATION, HUMANITY, and LIBERTY, greater than have been carried during the whole period that has elapsed between the revolution of 1688 and their accession in 1830. And in minor matters, they reduced taxation, abated monopolies, and extended trade, commerce, and manufactures. It may be worth while to recall some of these facts, for amidst political turmoils, the public memory is short, and its gratitude shorter still. They illustrate also the temper of the times.

But before naming these reforms we must guard against the attempts the Tories are constantly making to separate Lord Grey's from Lord Mel-

bourne's Government; affecting now to mix themselves up with and claim credit for the first, as if they had not more strenuously and bitterly opposed Lord Grey than even Lord Melbourne. But because two of their present leaders were active speakers, but in no degree leaders under the Whigs, they seek to pass them off as the living representatives of Lord Grey's, and to discard Lord Melbourne's as an altered Government. This is in keeping with some other of their pretensions, to accredit which, they and all the world must first forget it was from Lord Grey's Government that Lord Stanley and Sir James Graham seceded, and that too upon a cardinal point of Irish policy adopted by Lord Grey, and since followed up by Lord Melbourne — and, moreover, that *it was against Lord Grey's Government that Lord Stanley made his too well known thimble-rig speech.* Lord Stanley and Sir James Graham carried with them in their secession not enough followers to fill the six insides of the "Derby Dilly," for the great Whig party continued essentially the same as before, in both Houses of Parliament, in all its old principles, and with all its old followers in the country; and so it remains unchanged to this day. The falling off at the elections in 1835, was of those who had temporarily joined the Whig ranks at the time of the Reform Bill, from various motives. Of course, in all parties there will be from time to time changes of side and opinions,

(perfectly conscientious) by individuals, but these individuals can be no more said to carry their abandoned party and principles with them, however much they may fancy so, than the man who sailing down a river moves, because he fancies he sees moving the land he is leaving behind. It would seem needless to prove the connection of two Governments by one and the same party, and by nearly all the same persons; but the contrary has been so unblushingly asserted, that it is perhaps useful to make these remarks before recording the great deeds of the Reform Government.

For the advancement of RELIGION, they provided a greater number of parishes, with resident ministers, effecting this by abolishing the sinful abuse of pluralities, and by increasing at the same time the value of the poorer livings, by applying to them the funds of sinecure prebendaries and canonries. They removed a fruitful source of discord between the minister and his parishioner, by the commutation of tithes. And they guarded the political independence of the Bishops, by restraining translations, and equalizing the revenues of the greater number of their Sees.

By the Marriage Act, after guarding all due legal observances, they relieved our clergy from the painful office of enforcing the Marriage Service of the Church of England, on those who dissented from it; leaving all Dissenters whatsoever to per-

form their marriage rites in their own churches according to the forms and rituals of their own persuasions.

By the partial reform of the Church in Ireland, they reduced the preposterous number of six-and-twenty Bishops and Archbishops, with flocks not even half so numerous in the aggregate, as the single flock of the Bishop of London. The funds of the reduced sees, were applied to ecclesiastical purposes, and many parishes were apportioned better; and the abuse of unions of Parishes abolished.

Yet the Whigs have been accused of undermining the Irish Church; *which when they received it from the Tories was really in danger*, being unable to collect its tithes, even with all the support of law proceedings and military assistance. But when the Whigs left office there was not a shilling of tithe in arrear, nor a single tithe grievance. Perhaps some of those, who so largely indulged in the luxury of denouncing the Whig Government as destructive of the Church, will, after looking at the present state of Ireland, have the candour to calculate and announce the probable amount of Irish tithes, that would have been collected under the *conservative* Government of Sir Robert Peel in 1843, if it had not been for the Irish Tithe Act of the *destructive* Government of Lord Melbourne, in 1836.

In matters of EDUCATION, the Whigs carried a permanent provision upon a comprehensive plan, for the education of every Irish child without distinction of sect, and without compromise of religious opinion. The Tory and High Church parties sought to raise the country against this charitable and Christian measure, by shouting mutilation of the Word of God, when Scripture extracts, (far more full than those of Mrs. Trimmer's Abridgment, which they themselves were actually using in their own English National Schools), were proposed to be the school reading books of the Irish. And there is still a party, from amongst which Sir Robert Peel has unfortunately thought fit to select his Irish Bishops, which is even now pursuing the same course. Its present leader, the Bishop of Down and Connor, so late as December, 1841, denounced *in a sermon* this national education, which is superintended by his Metropolitan, the Archbishop of Dublin, as little better than inculcating Deism or Mahometism. But these sinister attempts have all failed, for the Irish National Schools have gone on steadily increasing in numbers, utility, and acceptance with the public, until in 1842, they amounted to 2,721, instructing 319,792 children of all persuasions; and training also 199 male and female teachers during the year; while 200 additional schools, capable of admitting 25,793 more scholars were erecting. So that, at this moment, there are nearly 350,000 of the rising generation in Ireland,

bringing up to religious, moral, industrious, and mental acquirements, under this Whig institution.

A comprehensive measure of national education, was also attempted by the Whigs to be applied to England, but the growing strength of the Tory party overthrew it. The House of Lords actually addressed the throne against it; and the cause of national education in England, in consequence, yet lingers as a bone of bitter party and religious contention. But the Whigs not the less paved the way for the advancement of sound instruction amongst the people. One of Lord Althorp's earliest applications was for an annual grant of £30,000 per year, in aid of monies that might be raised by private bodies, for the erection of School-houses under the National and the British and Foreign School Societies. Lord John Russell carried it further, by raising the grant to £50,000., and constituting a responsible Board of Education. Also with a view to obtaining information, and securing an adequate performance of the School Duties, he instituted in 1839, a systematic inspection of all the schools that accepted pecuniary assistance. And, to provide against the lamentable want of intelligent schoolmasters, he proposed to establish a model school for them, in which religious as well as general instruction, moral training, and habits of industry should be kept closely in view. Sad and strange to say, a bigoted party-cry was raised against even these proposals; and the model-school fell before

the party-opposition of Noble Lords, and Right Reverend Prelates.

In the cause of HUMANITY.

Slavery, throughout all the British dominions, was abolished by the same Whigs, who, in 1806, abolished the Slave Trade.

They reformed the sanguinary abominations of our penal code. It is most satisfactory to them and to all friends of humanity, to know that the sentence and execution of death has been removed from twenty-five out of the thirty-one heads under which Sir Robert Peel collected capital offences in 1827. In illustration of this reform, we may state that if the offences which were tried in England last year had been tried under Sir Robert Peel's acts, there would have been no less than 2172 persons sentenced to death, instead of which there were only eighty, and of these eighty but ten were executed. And it is still more satisfactory to know, that in proportion to the general progress of crime, there has been a *decrease* instead of an increase of those offences, whose severe sentences have been mitigated; while also of these offences when tried there have been a far greater number of convictions, proving thereby that the mitigated law is in harmony with the feelings of the judges, the bar, and the jury. In further proof of the humane saving of life, and additional security from violence effected by the Whigs, we subjoin the following extract from official returns;—

During the four years, between 1820 and 1824, under Tory ascendancy, there were executed no less than 362 persons, being at the rate of 90 per annum.
Between 1824 and 1828, under Tory decline, 229 persons, or . . . . . 57 per annum.
Between 1832 and 1836, after the first Whig mitigations, 135 persons, or . . . 34 per annum.
Between 1838 and 1842, after the full operation of Whig mitigation, 36 persons, or . . 9 per annum.

And taking the average number of persons committed for murder, we find for the

Five years ending	1818	. . 440	persons.
,,	1836	. . 413	,,
,,	1842	. . 351	,,

Being a decrease of murder to the extent of 29 per cent. upon a population increased by 30 per cent. Surely it is no small triumph to have reduced the executing of man by his fellow man from 90 and 57 per annum to 9; and at the same time to have steadily and greatly diminished the crime of murder itself.

Despite the whining or the turgid abuse of mistaken or hypocritical philanthropists, the Whigs may glory also in the name of humanity for having reformed the Poor Laws, which had become the very hot-bed of idleness, corruption, oppression, and destitution. In the days of the old Law, there was no public eye to search out and expose the gross and abandoned profligacy reeking in the old workhouses, by the almost promiscuous intermixture of the sexes, there was no exposure of the grasping

flinty-heartedness that half-starved and flogged the defenceless inmates of one poor-house, or the corrupt profusion that stuffed them in another, out of the public rates; leaving them "to lollop and roll upon their beds after dinner when they were tired of doing nothing," or to laugh at the poor drudges of industrious laborers who, outside of the favored work-house, were barely earning by the sweat of their brows, a crust of bread and precarious existence,—there was scanty notice of the teeming prostitutes who raised a *decent* annuity out of the rising number of their illegitimate children,—or of the rate-paying fathers, who actually claimed and received a drawback from their own rates to cover the parish allowance for such children of their daughters,—and there is fainter recollection of how the farmers paid some large half of the wages of their laborers out of the parish rates, and how thriving overseers, who had cottages to let, or retail shops in want of customers, found benefit from the notoriously monstrous though now forgotten maladministration of the old Poor Laws.

Undoubtedly, the reformed Poor Law is not perfect; there may be, there must be in all human legislation many errors to correct, but none, except the most hypocritical or prejudiced, can for a moment deny that it is an immense improvement upon the old anomalous gangrene that was eating into the heart of the country. There must necessarily, in a Poor Law, be much that has both

the appearance and the reality of hardness, if not of harshness, for while it is a provision on the one hand for the stricken and the desolate, it must on the other offer a check to the idle and the dissolute. There is a set of shabby, cheat-the-devil people, who, loath to part with their own money, and having once paid their rates, are wont to persuade their consciences that a Poor Law should be the be-all and end-all of their charity, that in fact there should be no other claimants upon their charitable time and bounty than the rate collector. They are for paying tithe of mint and cummin, and nothing more. But the Poor Law was never meant for any such cruel purpose as to supersede private charity. It would be a curse instead of a blessing if it did. Its purpose is to save and sustain those whom none else either can or does sustain. But the sinking industrious laborer, who has been long and honorably known, the decayed struggling artizan, the overburthened family, the sick, the maimed, the halt, even the improvident, all these and endless other cases, should be sought out by the diligent and open hand of charity, and relieved, before the doors of the poor-house are thought of.

It is a crying shame and offence, how little of active, searching, ministering, personal charity, there is amongst us, especially in our towns; and until the high and the rich shall see fit themselves to search out amongst the poor, to know and be known by them, thus to give an impulse to the middle classes

below them, and so to knit, and to bring into charitable intercourse and support all the cords of society, the present Poor Law can never be said to have had a fair trial. Till this be done, liberally and systematically, the rich of this world can have no right to lay their heads upon their pillows and fancy they are charitable, because they give mere money; bare alms-giving and charity are very different things; the one without due inquiry often fosters idleness and imposition, the other never yet failed of its heavenly office of doing good.

All Poor Laws are in fact but the supplement of a nation's charity, and when that falls short, does not fill its measure, then neither the present nor any other Poor Law can sufficiently fulfil both. And there will be as there now is, misery, starvation and death in the land; but the stern accountability rests, not with the Poor Law, but with those hundreds of thousands, be they in high or middle classes, who neglect one of the first of christian duties. As it is the Poor Law which the Whigs with true patriotism did not fear to reform, although formerly decried and misrepresented, for election purposes, by some of the Tories, is now praised, defended and adopted in its fullest extent by them when in power, and after its success.

During all the various debates attending its introduction and passing, Sir Robert Peel, although so recently Home Secretary, and speaking daily upon all other subjects, never uttered one word upon the Poor Law, except once for a few minutes in Com-

mittee on an unimportant clause. Was this prudence or shabbiness?

RETRENCHMENT was a Whig pledge. One of their earliest acts, on their accession to office, was to reduce their own salaries.* They also abolished above 1,200 useless or sinecure places, with salaries amounting to nearly 300,000*l.* a year, and above 200,000*l.* more was saved in the Colonies. They thus saved the country half a million,—and half a million, be it remembered, spent by all their predecessors in jobbing, patronage, and corruption. No wonder which party made itself enemies! They also reformed the Pension List; and, on the accession of her present Majesty, they put an effectual bar to the old system of quartering on it the needy or spendthrift hangers-on of the Court and the Government. For they passed an act, limiting the annual pensions to 1,200*l.*, and directed that they should be granted only for recorded services rendered to the sovereign, the country, or to literature, art, or science.

In general expenditure they effected also great reductions. They found the total expenditure of the Empire, in 1829, amounted to 54,223,412*l.* They reduced this, in 1835, to 48,787,638*l.*; being a saving of nearly five millions and a half on an expenditure of some twenty millions a year, for the fixed charges exceeded twenty-nine millions. It is true, that the

* One of the earliest of the Tories, was to allow Lord Ellenborough to draw £12,000. a-year for a sinecure, while in the receipt of £30,000. in India.

revolt in Canada, brought on by years of Tory neglect and misgovernment,—that the armaments resulting from the differences with France on the Levant question, and the unavoidable war in China, (which has, however, paid itself,) caused a great increase of expense; but so thriftily had the Whigs managed the establishments of the country, that actually, in 1840, when all these causes of expense were in full activity, our expenditure was only 53,444,053*l.*, being nearly a million less than it was in 1829, under the Duke of Wellington, in a time of comparative tranquillity!

And we may here refer to those financial deficits, concerning which so large a handle has been made. If we take the accounts of the revenue and expenditure from 1831 to 1842, both years inclusive, we shall find that the total excess, in prosperous years, of revenue above expenditure, was 7,487,030*l.*; and in other years, of expenditure above revenue, 6,956,492*l.*; leaving a surplus balance of 530,538*l.* It is to be noted, that in this account is included the large deficit for 1841, which was made out by the present government against the Whigs, after they left office, and in which 400,000*l.* for the year's expenses in China was charged, while no credit was given for the Chinese indemnity. There was also a charge of 150,000*l.* for Chinese expenses in 1840. But these have been repaid; and, therefore, these two sums should be recredited to the Whigs and would make the true balance of sur-

plus revenue, under their whole administration, exceed a million, notwithstanding their reduction of seven millions a year of taxes.

For, during their administration, they REDUCED TAXES amounting to 11,495,100*l.*, and imposed others estimated at 3,727,600*l.*, leaving a balance of taxes remitted, exceeding seven millions a year; and as the greater part of these remissions were made soon after they took office, the country must have been relieved by them, during their administration of affairs, to the extent of from fifty to sixty millions; and it is to be remembered, that, during this time, also, they paid the twenty millions compensation to the slave-holders, thus increasing the annual charge on their revenue to nearly three-quarters of a million. The country will be glad to see the Tories taking off, instead of putting on, fifty or sixty millions of taxes in eleven years, and leave such a balance in their favour at the end.

For the abatement of MONOPOLIES. They opened the trade to China, hitherto the closest of all monopolies, they facilitated the trade with India, reduced the secret exclusiveness of the Bank Charter, and gave power for the formation of Joint Stock Banking Companies in the metropolis, as well as in the provinces.

Substantially they promoted TRADE, MANUFACTURES, and AGRICULTURE, by giving them freer vents; and by reducing taxes which pressed on the industrial energies of the country. The duties on

cottons, coals, candles, soap, farming stock, husbandry horses, salt, glass, slates, tiles, marine insurances, houses, and above 400 other articles of more or less importance in manufactures, were either greatly reduced or entirely repealed. And last, though far from least, all the written communications of the country were set free by the memorable Penny Postage,—the example of the beneficial effects of which are now producing Post-Office reforms throughout Europe. A strong evidence of the wisdom of this reduction of an exorbitant duty, is to be found in the fact that while all other sources of revenue have been falling away, the Post-Office revenue, after its first reduction has, notwithstanding many additional heavy charges, continued, with scarcely a quarter's exception, to increase.

The result of Whig administration upon the prosperity of general affairs, notwithstanding the quasi bankruptcy of the United States and the bad home harvests in 1839 and 1840, may be best proved by contrasting the returns of our Exports and Imports, taken in round numbers of millions, for averages of three years, beginning from the close of the Tory administration, thus—

	Exports.		Imports.
	Declared Value. In Millions.	*Official Value.*	*Declared Official Value.*
Average of 3 years, ending in 1829	36	48	42
" " 1836	48	79	49
" " 1841	52	98	64

This is solid evidence of the result of good government—of the natural consequences of reduced taxation—of confirmed tranquillity, and of enlarged vents for industry. Sixteen millions value added to our exports attest the attention paid to commerce, and two-and-twenty millions added to our imports, prove the thriving activity of our home markets and manufactures.

In the cause of LIBERTY, the Whigs passed the Reform Act, which needs no comment now, but which in the high days of Toryism it was almost sedition to debate outside the walls of Parliament, and which both Sir Robert Peel and the Duke of Wellington denounced over and over again as the destruction of the constitution of the country.

The Whigs re-invigorated and re-enfranchised the old worn-out municipalities of the three kingdoms, reviving, and spreading the active principle of representative government throughout our institutions.

Abroad they upheld the cause of freedom in France, Belgium, Spain, and Portugal; and successfully too, notwithstanding repeated Tory reproaches and motions of censure. Moreover, they maintained the peace of Europe, without concessions, and with increase of influence.

But notwithstanding all these beneficial acts, supplying the neglects and deficiencies of seventy years' Tory rule, coupled too with diminishing agitation in Ireland, and the cure of all sour and disloyal feelings amongst the middle classes in England, the

Whig Government gradually lost ground. Two powerful privileged bodies opposed it, the Clergy * and the Lords. The one misrepresented or misunderstood its policy, for shutting its eyes to its invaluable Church Reforms, it did not shrink from pointing it out with untiring zeal and acrimony to its parishioners, and its congregations, as hostile to the religion and institutions of the country ; and the other exercised its uncontrolled majority by damaging, defeating, or delaying, almost every measure which the Ministers sent up from the Commons. The Government thus stigmatized by the Clergy, and impeded by the Lords, persisted in bringing forward its measures, trusting that their intrinsic value would ultimately work their way, and teach the public to see through and resent such unfair and undue opposition. But they were mistaken, the public fell off from them even more, and adhered still more to the Lords, because they did not pass measures which those very Lords would not allow them to pass. And the Lords thus began to constitute themselves the paramount estate of the kingdom. It is remarkable, that within a few years after the passing of that Reform Act, which was supposed to trench too much on their authority, the very Ministry which passed it should have been overruled, coerced, and defeated by them. But it is not

* We here use the word Clergy as distinguished from the Church, with which it is too frequently and for artful purposes confounded.

the less true. The Lords undeniably broke up the Liberal Government. Other causes may have contributed to its fall, but they would have been inadequate without the annulling power, the veto of the Lords, exercised with a persevering subtlety that kept just within the bounds of arresting the routine of administration.

This exhibits the Lords in the possession of a power justly subject to jealousy, and is worth a little investigation. In the first place, then, it is probable, that public opinion would have revolted from the exercise of such rejecting powers, had not public opinion itself been perverted. John Bull allowed himself to be cajoled into a belief, that a Government which had done, and was doing more than has been done, since the days of Luther, for the advancement of truly religious sentiments, and for the permanent and useful services of a Christian ministry, (as contra-distinguished from one of pluralities, state patronage, and sinecures,) was actually ready and willing to sacrifice the established Church, and to set up the Pope, or the goddess of Reason in its stead. Under this delusion he was blind to the encroachments of the Lords. Again, the Whig ministers had unwisely drafted from the Commons into the Lords, some fifty or sixty of their most influential supporters: removing them from one House, where their weight was most important, to another, where it was neutralized, and where there is always the danger of sympathies being

enlisted in favour of more recent associations. And removed from parliamentary elections, these wealthy commoners left vacancies, which there was seldom any liberal candidate, of equal calibre, to fill up; and, accordingly, the representation fell either to men of inferior note, or to opponents. Again, experience has proved, that although some individual Peers lost invidious nominations in the Commons, which exasperated public opinion, yet, on the whole, their order has gained in less offensive influence over elections, and most especially in the counties, and sub-divisions of counties.

These are some of the causes that have enabled the Lords to exercise an extent of irresponsible control over the Commons, the Crown, and the Executive, which, if it should threaten to be permanent, would lead to a most dangerous struggle. But there are signs of public opinion recovering from its blind adulation, and this with the weight of the independent constituencies of the great towns of the empire, may gradually restore a portion of its constitutional authority to the Commons. But it is a subject of regret, and it may be a cause of much strife, that the authors of the Reform Act, unadvisably gave such unchecked influence to the great land-holders in the counties, and played into the un-English (if we may so use the word,) vanity of a number of English country gentlemen, who could not sleep in peace till they had put gilded coronets on their heads. But the solid substance of the Reform

Act, the representative principle which it at once acknowledges and embodies, will, we trust, carry us through. But that principle is now on its trial, and will have a hard struggle. We wish it success for many reasons; for if it be beaten now, it will return bye and bye, with redoubled force and success against those who can succeed, only for a season. The spirit of the Reform Act requires, and we shall soon see whether its present powers are strong enough to work out the equal admission of all classes, and all creeds, to the civil and religious rights of citizens, a just apportionment of taxation upon all, according to their means, and an abolition of all monopolies, and all special protections. These are the objects which are at the bottom of almost all present political discussions; hitherto they have been resisted by class interests and privileges, which have found their strong-hold in the Lords; so that there is again revived and involved in them, the organic question of whether this country is to be ruled in the sense of its people, through its representatives, and under the modified control of the Peers and the Crown; or whether the House of Lords is, as before the Reform Bill, to govern the country under the modified acquiescence of the Crown and the Commons. At present we are under the rule of the Lords; the Duke of Wellington is their chief, and Sir Robert Peel their minister; and we proceed now to see what they have done, are doing, and are likely to do.

When the Whigs left office in the autumn of 1841, there had been three successive bad harvests,* there had been a great monetary convulsion in the United States, (our greatest customer), and the Post Office duties had been reduced to the amount of a million. To counteract the effect of these drawbacks on the Exchequer, an additional 10 per cent. was imposed on the Customs, Excise, and Taxes. This met with the approbation even of Sir Robert Peel; but like all over-onerous taxation it not the less failed, for there was a heavy deficiency the following year. This might partly be attributed to the extraordinary expenses in the Mediterranean, Canada, and China, but which were all apparently drawing to a close. Still this was uncertain, and in the meanwhile it was mischievous to go on with deficiencies. The failure of the additional 10 per cent. to produce any thing like a revenue equivalent to its ratio, was an indication that it would be worse than useless to burden the country, in its then depressed state, with heavier taxes. It was clear our whole system of taxation required revision and reform. The statements and facts contained in the report of the Committee upon our Import duties had produced a great effect on the public mind. It is well known that the Exchequer often derives a benefit by the reduction of excessive duties upon

* The increased cost of grain in each of the three years, ending in 1839, 1840, and 1841, as compared with 1835, has been estimated at not less than 20 millions.

articles of large consumption, and it is still better known that the country always does. And in the suffering state to which the industrious and more especially the manufacturing interests were reduced by adventitious circumstances, aggravated by mischievous fiscal laws, it was clear some stimulus or change was necessary to revive and strengthen it, otherwise severer suffering, such as afterwards came on, was to be expected. Under these circumstances the Whigs undertook financial reform, and brought forth their celebrated budget, proposing an enlarged importation of sugar, corn, and timber, by the reduction of all protecting duties to a fixed and moderate rate. This was their *coup de grace*; it raised a tempest of protected interests against them, which, joining with the Tory opposition, left them in minority in their own parliament, and on a dissolution gave their opponents a majority, ranging from 80 to 100.

Principles and Proceedings of the Tory or Repressive Government.

The Tories came in. The principles and promises of their government were resistance to all change, and the maintenance of all existing laws, privileges, protections, immunities, and institutions, subject only to the usual puff redress of all proved abuses. Sir Robert Peel and his party had especially denounced the influence which Mr. O'Connell exercised in Ireland, and they were so far pledged to

reduce it. They had censured the object of the war in China, and despaired of its success; they had pronounced against all wars in India, and objected generally to the foreign policy of the Whigs. They most especially pledged themselves to uphold the Corn Law, and above all the Sliding scale. "Who has defended the Corn Law more consistently than I have?" indignantly exclaimed Sir Robert Peel, when taxed by Mr. Handley with a lurking intention to change it. Another most emphatic pledge was, against allowing any deficiency in the Exchequer. This was their programme, the bill of fare of the third reaction ministry.

A ministry which had been preparing for years, and was now at length constructed by the all experienced state-craft of Sir Robert Peel, which was strengthened by the energy and high character of the Duke of Wellington, which had enlisted under its banners the altered politics but eminent talents, of Lord Stanley and Sir James Graham; and which, in all its departments, was well supplied with able members; which united within its circle all the leading names or representatives of the great Tory families; which was worshipped by the clergy, and supported by the agricultural and colonial interests almost universally; which carried with it a very large proportion of the professional, the trading, and mercantile communities, and that non-descript, but weighty, body that gives its vote to what it considers a strong and permanent government.

In fact, nearly the whole country, weary of the checkmated efforts of the Whigs, and deluded by incessant misrepresentations, looked to this powerful and promising ministry to extricate it from all difficulties and dangers, real or imaginary. This was its support out of doors, and within the two Houses, many of the greatest speakers were enlisted in its service, or in its defence. Within the memory of man, there never was, seemingly, so strong a ministry; nor person so exalted as Sir Robert Peel. This was in September, 1841.—What is he? what is his ministry now? Precisely that which some few, those who remembered the course of the Duke of Wellington's reaction ministry of 1828, expected. He is hampered and defeated in the very abundance of his numbers, by the impracticability of his position. He can neither advance, stand still, nor retreat without giving offence. He has again misunderstood, and miscalculated public opinion. Because it was comparatively quiet under the Whigs, he thought it was stagnant; but no sooner has he embarked his ministry, than he feels its current. If he sincerely wished to retard progress, his place was in opposition where he could apply the drag-chain, but in office, now-a-days, he is necessarily carried on. For the schoolmaster is abroad. Not the mere machine that teaches alphabets,—useful though he be,—but the great moral instructor that is daily, hourly raising the tone of the nation, and inculcating respect from

man to man. This is the source of the power which is undermining the present, as it undermined the former reaction ministry, by compelling it, as the price of existence, to act contrary to its principles. It destroyed the stout Duke of Wellington's ministry in three years, making it a bye-word for change of purpose; and in two years, it has prostrated Sir Robert Peel's power and character.

We are no enemies of Sir Robert Peel. We are well aware of his many domestic virtues, we fully admit his adroit talent in debate, his steady application to business, and his general abilities as a statesman, he is also exempt from jobbing, and plain in habits. But with all this, he is only a second rate man. Mr. Canning called him the sublime of mediocrity; and there is much of truth in the sarcasm. He has originated nothing, except the London police; no speech of his has ever lived beyond the day, no sayings of his are quoted, or remembered for their wit, or their wisdom; all about him, like his person, is common-place, second hand, well got up. It is especially to be remarked, that in every great question that has been mooted since he came into public life, he has been behind-hand; one of the latest to see and acknowledge its fitness, or value, and not unfrequently a strenuous opponent of it to the last.

He began by opposing Mr. Horner's celebrated resolutions on the currency; he ended, by himself carrying the return to cash payments; he opposed

Sir Samuel Romilly's humane attempts to simplify our Criminal Laws, and to mitigate their revolting severity; and then, many years later, he took some hesitating steps in the same direction, but satisfied or alarmed with a few digests, he left its revolting severities untouched and unrebuked. He taunted Mr. Canning, in 1827, with his inability to resist the abolition of the Test and Corporation Act, and was himself, under the compulsion of Lord John Russell, no later than the following year when Secretary of State, an example of the very inability he denounced; for the first twenty years of his political life, he was the uncompromising opponent of Catholic Emancipation, suddenly he opened the sessions of 1829 with an unrestricted Emancipation bill. In 1826 he approved of educating the Irish Protestant and Catholic children together, and of giving them Scripture extracts as school books—in 1832 he disapproved—in 1835 he re-approved—and in 1842 he united both opinions by approving in words, and discouraging by deeds, this system. Again in 1815 he defended, in 1833 he denounced, and in 1842 he imposed an Income Tax. These are no small errors or changes for a statesman, priding himself on his *conservatism*, to have committed in less than one half of Lord Grey's honored and unchanging political life. Again, as indications of ignorance of constitutional rights and popular feelings, Sir Robert Peel opposed Parliamentary Reform in every stage; he opposed

the Corporations Reform; he opposed the reform of the Irish Church, he opposed the Irish, and has marred the English National Education; and again, on all the early Slavery debates, when the battle was won by the emancipators step by step, and session after session, where was Sir Robert Peel's voice, and where was his vote?

Thus, all the great leading measures which have been advocated and carried since he came into public life, have been opposed and mistaken by him for sources of mischief; while now, ninety-nine people out of a hundred, (and himself amongst them) hail them as great advances in the paths of liberty, justice, and humanity. These facts, and they are undeniable, are the elements by which his character and statesmanship are to be judged.

They lead to a general distrust in his politics. Unfortunately, also, they have led him to distrust himself; finding there is scarcely any one political principle upon which he has remained consistent, he is haunted by visions of change, and has therefore acquired a habit of shrouding himself upon nearly all questions, even the most trivial, in such an atmosphere, such a fog of generalities, qualifications and reservations, that no one can tell what he would be at.

The only two subjects to which at present he can be said to be firmly pledged, are Anti-repeal and the Sliding scale, and from one of these two he will recede before he is two years older. His anti-

deficiency pledge is already cracked. All this is mischievous; it unsettles men's minds, it leads to a distrust in public integrity, and tempts public men into a jargon of Jesuitism wherein truth suffers; wherein plain straight-forward truth is paltered with, and equivocation bears the palm from manly honor. This is one of the worst signs of the times: and the sooner it is amended the better. We are far from accusing Sir Robert Peel of deliberately paltering with truth; we believe him to be in private life a man of unblemished honor and integrity; but he has been in a false position throughout his whole public career. The tone of his knowledge, of his early associations, and of his natural tendencies, so far as they can be gathered, is practical, modern and progressive; yet circumstances or ambition having thrown him, at his outset, amongst the very antipodes of these, he has never had the fortitude to disentangle himself from them, nor the hypocrisy quite to belie them. The consequence is, that his public life has been a course of paltering, shifting, patching and repatching. He is the very Balaam of politicians, called upon to denounce one set of political opinions, he ends generally by adopting and blessing them.

The agricultural kings of Moab little thought, during the elections of 1841, when they called him to a high place to bless their wheat and their short horns, that he would so soon take up his reduced scale and his tariff to confound their expectations,

and make them eat their own words, and vote against their own motions. And they have not got the worst of him yet.

This has been a long digression ; but it will throw light on our inquiries ; for knowing our man we may the better estimate his measures ; and we proceed, therefore, by an examination of what he has done since his return to office, to speculate on what he will do, and on what he may be compelled to do.

He came back to Downing Street with great expectations, and his first measure was a prudent one ; but so blundered in its details as to be nearly a failure in the money market. He funded five millions in order to pay off and disencumber himself of all and more than all the old scores and deficiencies of his predecessors.

For even here, he took an unfair advantage. He kept out of sight the Chinese indemnity, of which there was even then assurance of its being obtained, and by so doing he damaged his opponents by making their deficiency appear larger than it justly was ; while he secured, for the credit of his own government, the whole amount of that indemnity. And it came most opportunely, serving to screen the untoward size of his own deficits. Having got this money vote, he prorogued Parliament in the midst of national distress, and took six months for consideration. The result was the Income Tax and the Tariff ; with a financial exposition and budget most highly lauded at the time, but whose estimates

and workings have proved more fallacious than those of any budget yet on record.

There is no need now to wade through the Income Tax, the Tariff and the Budget discussions. It is sufficient to mark the spirit with which these measures were proposed, and the results which they have produced.

In the first place, for the INCOME TAX. Sir Robert Peel belonged to the Government which, at the peace, sought to continue this war tax. 'Twas then said, let it be "for a short time,—only a very short time." So, copying this example, he said in 1842, "Take it for five years, perhaps only for three." The old Tories had not been caught in so shallow a trap, but joined the Whigs in kicking out and destroying all records of the tax they hated. Modern Tories, more docile, believed, or affected to believe in the three or five years. But who now, at the end of nearly two, will tell us we are one iota nearer the end of the Income Tax, than we were when it was first imposed—for perhaps only three years!!

The plea for its imposition was that we were actually at war, in China and in India!! As if those were the kind of wars contemplated as justifying the imposition of what is admitted to be a war tax, "for a time of extreme necessity." But even the Indian and the Chinese wars are ended. The one has paid its own expenses, and the cost of the other has been defrayed by the East India Com-

pany. But are we therefore nearer the end of our Tax? Another plea was that it was to cover our financial deficiency. But did it? Its immediate operation was to increase the deficiency it was proposed to remedy: and to aggravate the distress of of the already distressed. Within the memory of man there has not been such a winter of misery, bankruptcy, and financial distress as that which followed its imposition. Like a great wen, it sucked up all the various supplies of our usual sources of revenue. Although the harvest was considered to be so abundant, that public thanksgivings were ordered to be returned for its blessings; yet, in every one of the branches of our revenue, save and except the reformed Post Office, there was a great falling off. A falling off, too, be it remembered, from branches of revenue already unprecedently fallen away. What else could have caused this, but the voracious suction of the Income Tax? The total deficiency amounted to no less than 2,400,000*l.*, being, even under the most favourable aspect, 250,000*l.* greater than the much reproached deficit of the Whigs in 1841. But it was, in fact, still greater; for Sir Robert Peel took credit for 511,000*l.* received from China, which had nothing whatever to do with his revenue; and the true deficiency was, therefore, 2,911,000*l.* Nay, it was more even by his own calculations, for, in his revenue sheet, there was a credit for 1,300,000*l.* for corn duties; whereas corn formed no item whatever

in his estimates. This would raise the deficiency to the enormous sum of 4,211,000*l.* for the first year of the imposition of that panacea for the cure of all deficits—the Income Tax. It is true, that since the arrears have been collected, this deficiency has been diminished,—the tax yielding 5,100,000*l.*, instead of the 3,771,000*l.* at which Sir Robert Peel placed it. But this in no degree diminishes,—on the contrary, it enforces the proof of its unwholesome influence on our accustomed sources of revenue. And herein it bids fair to supersede much of their operation, and so to insinuate and fix itself, as an established tax, on our financial system. A tax, be it remembered, by which the possessors of casual, precarious, mercantile, and professional incomes, worth only from five to ten years' purchase, pay as much, and are ten times as much vexed and harassed by its schedules and collection, as those who hold permanent incomes and estates worth more than thirty years' purchase. In other words, the precarious incomes of the productive classes are taxed from three to six times as much as those of the idle and independent. And this injustice seems, for the present, likely to last. Still, if it be any comfort to the tax-payers, they may have Sir Robert Peel's condemnation of his own tax; for, in the debate on the budget, in April, 1833, he said,—

"The Noble Lord had done well, not to bring in an Income or a Property Tax. Nothing but a case of *extreme necessity* could justify Parliament in subjecting the people of this country,

in a time of peace, to the inquisitorial process which must be resorted to, in order to render that impost productive: and to have recourse to such a machinery, for the purpose of *raising two or three per cent., would be most unwise.* Such a tax was a great resource in time of necessity; and, therefore, he was unwilling, by establishing the offensive inquisition with which it must be accompanied, to create such an odium against it, as might render it almost impracticable to resort to it in time of extreme necessity. The application of the tax to Ireland, would be attended with extreme difficulty. He really believed that this circumstance formed the main obstacle to the establishment of the tax. It hardly could be contended, that if a Property Tax were established, Ireland should be exempted from its operation. He wished to see Ireland as much favoured as possible, consistently with justice; but to impose a Property Tax upon England and Scotland, *and to exempt Ireland* from its operation, would, in his opinion, however unpopular that opinion might be, *be exceedingly unjust.*"

Now this is a deliberate opinion on a great financial question, which involves no change of circumstances, and with which Sir Robert Peel had been conversant during his whole political life, and therefore, unless it be a forgery, (but it stares one in the face in Hansard), either he declared, in April, 1833, as his opinion, that which he knew was not his opinion,—or, in March, 1842, he proposed that which he believed to be "unjustifible," in its imposition, "most unwise," in its rate, and "exceedingly unjust" in its exemptions. His only escape,—and would it be an escape?—from this damaging dilemma, would be, to acknowledge that he has no fixed opinion even upon such dry matters as finance. If we pursue this speech fur-

ther, we shall find him, in 1833, declaring, that "it "would diminish the funds at present appointed for "the encouragement of industry and promotion of "labour, and it would ultimately be found, that "this tax did not affect the person who paid it, so "much as the labourer, by diminishing his means "of employment;" and yet, in 1842, the same person declares that he is supporting the depressed industry of the country, and most especially the artisans and labourers, by imposing this very same tax, which he then discovers would press only on the rich. And to make the countermarch on this Income Tax complete he taxed the funded property of foreigners, having before solemnly declared that to do so would be a violation of national faith and honour.

All this is painfully illustrative of Sir Robert Peel's fleeting political character. Who can wonder that nobody trusts him? It is not easy to see into any one's heart, and least of all, into his; but, bred up in the receipt and defence of the Income Tax, it is most probable that, at the bottom of his heart he admires it, and that he put forth his condemnation of it in 1833, partly to damage his political opponents, by raising a suspicion that they were contemplating its imposition, partly to fish popularity, but, mainly, to sound his way, as to imposing it at some future time.

But, although Ireland did escape "exceedingly unjustly" from an income tax that might have yielded a million, (if she had been caught she would

have strenuously helped us to shake it off,) yet she was teazed and injured by a pretended substitute,—an additional duty on spirits,—that has paid nothing; less than nothing. Lord Monteagle and others, well acquainted with Ireland, vainly warned Sir Robert Peel, that this substitute would be prolific only of smuggling. He would not heed them; and so, instead of getting the 250,000*l.*, at which he placed his estimate, he actually lost about 7000*l.*, for the Irish spirit duty yielded 7,700*l.* less than before this additional duty was imposed. But what was lost in money has been made up in crime. By a printed return, it appears, that this ill-judged measure more than doubled the offences against the excise laws in one year.

	Smugglers detected.	Smugglers prosecuted.	Smugglers imprisoned.
There were in the year			
And in April, 1842	881	317	84
" April, 1843	1895	664	368

Happy finance! a positive loss to the revenue, the whole estimate swamped, crime more than doubled, and four times as many smugglers imprisoned! This was too bad,—and, accordingly, the additional duty was abandoned; but not until after two or three irresistible exposures of its mischief and inefficacy. And so Ireland now laughs at Income Tax, Spirit Duty, and Ministers!

Next comes the consideration of the Corn Laws and Tariff. It is not unlikely that Sir Robert

Peel was led to the adoption of the Income Tax by the Corn Laws; for, as he had opposed the great Whig plan of raising the revenue by reducing the mischievous excess of duties, he had no other alternative than the high pressure of searching personal taxation. Still he had no easy game to play with his Corn-Law supporters. He was bound to uphold their monopoly, not perhaps so much by a regard for his own pledges, as by the significant declaration of one of their leaders, the Duke of Richmond, that as the agricultural party had turned out the late, so would they turn out the present Ministers, if they did not support the landed interest. This was coarse, but to the point.—On the other hand, he could not shut his eyes to the plain fact, which even his prosperous elections did not conceal, that something must be conceded to the public leaning towards Free Trade. And, accordingly, he set himself to work to reconcile, to mix up the oil and vinegar of free trade and monopoly. He bethought himself for a while, and then, if not with the ability of a statesman, certainly with the cleverness of an artist, he threw in his grains of mustard, a little dust to blind people's eyes; and the oil and the vinegar coalesced, and made a very showy temporary paste. He saw that it was necessary, by some apparent changes, to alarm the more ignorant monopolists up to a certain point, in order to persuade the rest of the community, that important reductions were actually taking place. It was neces-

sary also to talk very free-tradishly, in order to *act* very little so—to have plenty of the abstract, and little or none of the concrete;—and finally it was necessary to make a great show of mighty reforms on very little and weak matters, in order to cover a mere show of very little reforms upon very great and powerful matters. All this was concocted and performed by Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Gladstone with consummate dexterity. Herr Dobbler and the Wizard of the North could not have exceeded them.

The operation commenced by pouncing upon 750 trifling articles, beginning with jackasses, and ending in zinc; the whole revenue from which amounted to no more than £270,000., being at the rate of 360*l.* a-piece. The duties upon these were either repealed or greatly lowered; and this was called national relief!! and extravagant merit claimed for it.

One of the main grounds for this claim, and one of the prepared masks, behind which the Corn-Laws were to be covered, was the admission of foreign cattle and foreign meat at a moderate fixed duty. The landed interest stood aghast at visions of the invasion of their markets by fat and lean cattle and kine from all quarters of the world. This was precisely that which for their own interests Sir Robert Peel most desired; and following out this desire, he had the effrontery (for it can be called by no other name,) to tell the economists that people would save their income tax by the reduction of

their expenses consequent upon his Tariff; and then, fearful lest his agriculturists should think him in earnest, and in their visions lose, as some of them did lose, all sense of restraint; with an aside more worthy of an actor than a minister; he just let drop the information that few cattle and little meat could or would come in under this income-tax-saving-Tariff! He was right enough, and he knew it. The returns give 422 oxen—154 cows—93 sheep—and 142 pigs, with 470 cwt. of beef—1414 of pork—and 2191 hams, as the total admission in all the ports of the kingdom for the first six months in the year—being not enough for one morning's breakfast for London alone. But the temporary object was gained; the country thought great things were doing, and felt doubly assured when it saw so many agricultural wry faces.

And so the Corn-Law slipped through much easier than might have been expected; but even here it was thought expedient to effect a change. Sir Robert Peel, therefore, undertook to do in 1842 that which in 1839 he declared he would not do—"put into the lottery of legislation with the faint hope of drawing a better corn-law;"—but we must do him the justice to say he contrived so to alter it as to leave the result nearly the same as ever to his landed supporters. The average price of wheat under the late Law, during the whole period of its existence, since 1828, was stated by him to be about 56 shillings the quarter; and on introducing

his new law, he declared that its object was to keep corn at from 54 to 58 shillings the quarter. The alteration consisted, in fact, in little more than taking off extravagant rates of duty, which never came into operation, and brought therefore needless odium on the cause of protection. The far-famed sliding scale was also relieved from those desperate plunges of three and four shillings at each shilling variation of price, which seemed formed for the express purpose of provoking gambling speculations; being placed at the very pivots where importation was most likely to take place. But though these wild jumps, which were too wild to be of any use to the landed interest, were abandoned, the sliding scale itself was solemnly upheld. And why? For any facility that it affords to regular and sufficient importation, or to the gradual sale, or to steadiness of the price of grain? No, no. No one now in the face of the facts that have been produced of late years, affects to assert, or at least to prove this. Why then was it maintained? Palpably and clearly, because its one shilling fall in duty, consequent upon the one shilling rise in the price of grain, gives a double action, multiplies the tendency to keep up and raise prices. Instead of one shilling profit upon each successive rise of one shilling in price, as in all other merchandize, we here have two shillings; one for price, one for duty; and hence a double temptation to sellers to hold back their corn, and so to force up its price. This is the

real clue to the affection of the Knatchbulls to the otherwise outrageously silly sliding scale. It gives them in fact, just one hundred per cent. permanent premium for a rise in price of the article in which they deal; no wonder, therefore, they stick by it.

But adroitly as Sir Robert Peel steered the Corn Law gentry through their immediate dangers, they are far from satisfied with his pilotage. They distrust the very cleverness of his pretences and admissions, and he seems to be in no love with their obstinate dulness. When the squires and he, and their Corn Laws, are all thrown out together, they with Tony Lumpkin, will retort upon him,—"By the Laws, Sir Robert, it was your own cleverness, and not our stupidity that did the business. You were so nice and so busy with your Shake-bags and your Goose-greens, that we thought you could not be making believe."

We do not think he was making believe, his Tariff bags and political economy were perhaps tolerably sincere. It was at the elections he was making believe, when he was wheedling the monopolists, and coaxing the Duke of Buckingham into his Cabinet; and then when he had served his purposes, turning him out with a blue riband round his neck ticketed "sold," like a prize ox at a cattle show. Had he manfully stood up, and resisted all protective and Corn-Law concessions, as indeed he was virtually if not literally pledged to do, he might, or he might not, have succeeded; but now,

he has, as Lord John Russell aptly remarked, unsettled every thing and settled nothing. He acts as the teazer upon public opinion. His "No" is too coy to be trusted, and his reluctant "Yes" seldom goes far enough to produce a lasting settlement. As now in Corn, notwithstanding his "No," he has set the barn door ajar, and admitted the justice of principles, which henceforth cannot fail to throw it open. The crisis of the battle is won, and every one sees it is a question now of time only, and the Corn Law party seeing this, owe him no thanks for what they consider his hollow defence.

His present object seems to be an attempt at compromise; an endeavour to set up a kind of half way smuggling house, between Protection and Free Trade. To substitute a colonial ring fence for the old crumbling wall of strictly English protection. And behind this he thinks he can defend both himself and the monopolists. He tried it in many of the minor articles of his tariff. He enforced it in the timber duties at a cost to the revenue of £676,000. and to the dissatisfaction of all parties, even to the Canadians whom he professed to be serving, while in fact he was serving only the ends of this new scheme of evasion. Last session it was tried again, with the Canada Corn Bill, in which (like the Cattle Tariff,) the song to the one side of the House was, see how largely we promise, and to the other, mark how little it will perform.

But it is not by subterfuges like these that the

great question of the reduction of duties on articles of prime necessity and importance, is to be staved off. It is quite right that the colonies should be supported, but it is quite wrong that they should be supported to the detriment of the mother country, and especially when what is called the support of the colony means too frequently not the support of its people but the special support of some favored and powerful clique or interest there and in the mother country.

One thing is clear, Sir Robert Peel's principles and his practice are at variance. On the 11th March 1842 he declared that the import duties on raw materials should not (scarcely in any case) exceed 5 per cent, that on partially manufactured articles they should not exceed 12 per cent, and on complete manufactures that the maximum duty should be 20 per cent. Now corn is a raw material, just as much as cotton, yet corn pays by his own act, in direct contradiction to his own principles, seventeen shillings duty on its average price, (as assumed by him) of from 55 to 56*s*. the quarter. That is to say, above 30 per cent. duty ; being 10 per cent. more than his maximum duty, upon completely manufactured articles, and 25 per cent. more than his just established rate of duty upon the class of articles to which corn belongs. In the case of colonial sugar the contradiction is still more glaring, and in that of foreign sugar, and foreign timber and coffee, extravagantly so. Why are all

these excluded from the operation of his so formally and so recently declared principles? If we ask his parliamentary whippers-in, they will wink their eyes and laugh. But just men, without distinction of party, will mark that he does not mete the same measure to the strong that he does to the weak; that he can let in comparatively free trade upon seven hundred and fifty minor articles, upon the protection of some of which many poor and defenceless artizans may have lived; but that he can closely shut it out from some few articles the cheapness of which are of prime import to the country, and to the poor especially, but by the dearness of which some rich and powerful classes become, or think they may become, more rich and more powerful. When they consider this, and hear how glibly he, Sir James Graham, and Mr. Gladstone can say, "there is now no great difference of opinion on the principles of free trade,"—"that true political wisdom is to buy in the cheapest, and sell at the dearest market," and "that the principles of free trade are the principles of common sense;" they will turn round and ask him whether the principles of justice are not also the principles of common sense.

We shall say very little of the Foreign Policy of the present government, because apparently there has been little or no change from that which their predecessors followed, and which the Tory party then constantly condemned.

The Louis Philippe who in the days of Tory opposition was an usurper, and the mock king of the barricades, is now a sage monarch, to whom their Ministers conduct (and wisely) their Queen to pay a visit of honor. The Belgian monarchy, and by far the wisest and best king in Europe, whom the Tories facetiously used to call the king of the Protocols, have also been distinguished by the same royal honor,—Lord Aberdeen, who accompanied her Majesty, possibly forgetting his diversion in favor of Holland in 1832.

Don Carlos, who in the heyday of Tory opposition was a lawful sovereign fighting for his crown, is now, in the new creed, deservedly, a prisoner at Bourges.—Espartero, who in Tory eyes was a traitor in 1841, became, in 1843, in the language of Sir Robert Peel, the head of the best government that Spain has yet enjoyed; and he to whom it was an outrage upon the honor of our knighthood for the Whigs to send the Grand Cross of the Bath, was justly, though not very consistently under Tory advice, an honored guest at Windsor in his adversity.

Lord Aberdeen, in his good will towards the constitutional government of Donna Maria, has probably forgotten also his old friend and tormentor, Dom Miguel, but there yet remains the record of Mr. Courtenay's motion in February 1832.

Towards the great Northern Powers precisely the came policy is maintained as under the Whigs.

The same views are professed at Constantinople upon Turkish, Syrian and Egyptian affairs.

Wars in India were declared by Tories in opposition to be abominable, in power they have multiplied and are multiplying them. Acquisitions of territory beyond the Indus were neither made nor contemplated by Lord Auckland, but a charge to that effect was by implication most unbecomingly raised against him by his Tory successor, in a public proclamation, and ere the ink which wrote that proclamation was dry, the hero of Somnauth, without much care for justice or geography, annexed Scinde to the British possessions in India.

The war in China was declared by Sir James Graham, in his motion on the subject, to be hopeless, and by Mr. Gladstone to be atrociously wicked; while both propositions were rather insinuated than asserted by Sir Robert Peel. The Duke of Wellington alone spoke out, and in a manly, straightforward tone totally dissented from his whining factious colleagues. But now forsooth, after success, the Tories claim credit for the war they condemned, and are steadily following up the Whig policy in China, and adopting the officers, Gough, Parker and Pottinger, whom they selected.

Regarding the United States there has been little difference of opinion, and the Tories have credit for having settled, by pretty liberal concessions, the Boundary question, their own ancient legacy to the Whigs, and which they had been vainly hammering at from

the Treaty of Ghent to the year 1830, and which, had their commissioner, Mr. Goulburn, done his duty at Ghent, would have never been raised.

There is, however, one marked difference in the foreign diplomacy of the present and of the late Government. The one succeeded and the other has failed. The Whigs re-opened the Dardanelles, which the Tories had permitted Russia to command; they succeeded also in Portugal, Belgium, Spain, and in the resolute settlement of the Levant question. While their successors have already heen foiled by France in Spain, and by Russia on the Danube. The Whigs also carried treaties of commerce for the extension of our trade, not to mention the unlocking and setting open the door for our manufactures to 300,000,000 Chinese customers; whereas, it so happens that the Tories have failed in every one of their efforts to make commercial treaties, and most especially in Brazil, which already, under the Tariff now about to close, consumes five millions of our produce, and which would take off double that amount. But now France is fast superseding us there, in consequence of our Government, for the sake of the votes of the Colonial sugar interests, refusing to admit Brazilian sugar at a fair duty; affecting to screen this injustice beneath the hypocritical pretence of abhorring to encourage slavery by taking Brazilian slave sugar, while in the same breath it boasts of its imports of Brazilian slave coffee. With Portugal, too, its lingering failure of success,

has thrown the wine and other trades into much difficulty and suspense. And, for old party friendship's sake, the king of Hanover is permitted to cripple our trade with the Elbe by his unjust Stadt duties. It is thus that this Government fails in one of its first duties; and it has, moreover, suffered no less than six hostile Tariffs to pass during its two and a half years' possession of office.

This has hitherto been the substance of Sir Robert Peel's performances as a minister; all his other attempts have been failures. We used to hear much of Lord Melbourne's do-nothing sessions, but there was then a substantial impediment in the Lords. Whereas now his successor, with both Houses at his command, closed last session with every one of his measures foiled, still-born, or withdrawn; with the solitary, needless, and mischievous exception of the Irish Arms Bill.

The Ecclesiastical Courts Bill was given up; so also the Registration of Deeds Bill. The Law Reform, so pompously mentioned in the Royal Speech, came to nothing. The pledge made in 1842, that an amended Poor-Law Bill should be introduced in 1843, and on the faith of which the Poor-Law Commission was then continued, was either forgotten or disregarded. And the Education, or as it was masked under the name of the Factories Bill, was thrown up and defeated by the energy and indignation of the dissenting interests of all classes.

This EDUCATION Bill deserves some few com-

ments. There has long been a party jealous of the education of the people, seeing clearly enough that it leads almost necessarily to their participation in power. For a long time, therefore, they opposed and sneered at all efforts to educate them, expending their small wit upon literary hewers of wood, and drawers of water; but when they found that general education was largely taken up by the more enlightened and humane classes, as well as by the Dissenters, they changed their opinions, and from opponents became patrons, seeking to neutralize and turn to their own uses that which could no longer be entirely prevented. They sought to make the little education they suffered rather than promoted, formal, proselyting, and exclusive. In their national schools, which they placed under the direction of the Clergy of the Established Church, the education given has seldom gone beyond a little bad reading and writing, and learning the Church Catechism by rote rather than by heart. All schemes for a liberal and comprehensive national education, whether in England or in Ireland, have met with the untiring opposition of this party. Their constant war-cry is "irreligion," varied according to the circumstances of the case, whether it be "mutilation of the Word of God," "infidelity," "socialism," it matters not; the key-note is always the same, "irreligion,"—"you do not make sufficient provision that the people shall be educated religiously." This is their approved and standing objection

to all proposals; as if there was something inherently irreligious or immoral in education itself. But when pushed for an explanation of this standing objection, it is found, underneath two or three foldings, to have little more to do with essential religion than this, that you do not hand over the education of the people to the exclusive control of the clergy of the Church of England; and knowing this to be impracticable, even were it desirable, the objection at bottom means neither more nor less than that there shall be no comprehensive fruitful education at all. A better body of clergy does not exist, probably, than the clergy of the Church of England; but they are not the only good body of Christian clergymen; and so long as there are other persuasions, and other clergy, all (even the so called most dissimilar) agreeing in the great fundamentals of Christianity, we must, if we intend an Education scheme to be anything but a mere stumbling block of offence, so form it in the spirit of Christian charity that none may be offended—none predominate. The school-house should be a common centre, in which all that is believed in common should be inculcated,—in which the great trunk of religious and charitable feelings should grow up, while the twining and the direction of the branches—the special instruction of the special persuasion—is left to the fathers' and mothers' home and to their ministers.

Sir Robert Peel's government owed a large debt

to this over-zealous party, and to their High Church and Puseyite clergy, and he paid it in full by his Education Bill. We can easily believe that he, Lord Wharncliffe, and others, would have willingly proposed a less illiberal bill, if they dared. But having raised and worked the Church cry in opposition, they are now punished in office, by finding an Ultra Priesthood party cramping and overruling them. One fruit was this Education, or Factories Bill. Beneath some thin disguises, it practically gave over to the control of the clergy of the Church of England, the education of all the factory children, although the greater part, probably two-thirds, of their parents are Dissenters, and are in the habit of sending their children to their own schools. In fact, the aim, or at least the working of the bill, would have been to supersede the Dissenters' schools; no wonder, therefore, that the Dissenters rose against it, almost to a man. It is needless to go into its details, now that it is abandoned; but the same parties are still active and influential, and it behoves all those who appreciate the inestimable worth of religious liberty, and true Christian charity (for toleration is an insolent word,) to be on their guard. That this caution is not needless, may be gathered from the suspicious circumstance that this Bill was aimed specially at the districts, which are the best educated, but in which education is chiefly in the hands of the Dissenters. While no change of education was proposed for the much less educated agricultural dis-

tricts and cathedral towns, where it is mainly in the hands of the Clergy. Take Dorsetshire, for instance, or even Westminster, where the proportion of Sunday scholars to population is as one to thirty-four; whereas, in Yorkshire, Lancashire, Cheshire, and Derbyshire, it is *as one to six.*

The introduction of this bill seriously injured the Government; and its defeat, for its withdrawal was a defeat, was the first exhibition of the weakness of mere numerical majorities in both Houses, when opposed by strong convictions.

We come now to Sir Robert Peel's HOME GOVERNMENT. In 1841, he found the three kingdoms suffering great distress, but tranquil—more tranquil than they had been for years: how infinitely more tranquil than they had been in old Tory times of suspensions of the Habeas Corpus Act, gagging bills, Cato-street conspiracies, and Manchester onslaughts; or of the later Peel and Wellington times of Catholic associations, Repeal commencements, Tithe wars, Swing fires, and Hunt demonstrations: how much more quiet, even than when he undertook his intrusive ministry of 1834. In fact, from 1831 to 1841, the three kingdoms were gradually tranquillizing. Of course, there were ebbs and flows, and the attempted Tory reaction did not diminish them. Habits cannot be put down in a day, or a year, as by a magician's wand, and disturbances will necessarily break out again and again; but as these become

less and less frequent, and are less and less extensive and violent, we may judge of their general subsidence. Examined by this test, it will be seen how much more tranquil the country became during the ten years of Whig rule, even, notwithstanding the great organic changes that were made.

Few examples can afford a stronger illustration of the altered bearing of the people after seven years of Whig rule, than the admirable demeanor of the millions congregated in and about London on the occasion of the Queen's coronation, contrasted with their state in 1830, when, after a long Tory domination, even the Duke of Wellington did not dare to take the popular William the Fourth through the streets of the city, to dine at Guildhall, on his accession.

The return of the same party to power, seems to have brought back the same turbulent and insurrectionary spirit, and even incendiarism is relighting its torches. The country, in fact, is fast losing its good temper. There is amongst us a manly love of fair play, and a dogged scorn of shuffling, greater even than our hatred of violence. And this feeling the present Government has awakened. Its first quarrel was with the Chartists.

Chartism is the natural exponent of hardship and discontent in a free country, and under some name or other always will exist in a greater or less degree of excitement and extension. After the summer of 1839, it was clear the Whigs could not last much

longer, and the expectation of change roused the Chartists. They thought they might get something by it, and the Tories having a keen eye to the elections, and seeing they should get something by them, began tampering with them as they had long done with the anti-poor law declaimers, many of whom are also Chartists. When the dissolution came, they had the first-fruits of their speculation in the inflammatory support of these questionable allies. As soon as they were in office they turned their backs on them both. The poor law was adopted, continued, and extended. And the Chartists were told to go and be—quiet: but thus cheated, they went and—combined. Still a winter of unprecedented suffering was borne by them and their starving companions with unexampled fortitude and forbearance. But when the spring came, and summer too came, and passed away, bringing no relief beyond a little warmth, and leaving them without hope, they lost patience. The Staffordshire colliers were the first to break out. These were gradually followed by others; and the country saw with shame a very dangerous insurrection spread throughout the whole length and breadth of the manufacturing districts, from Aberdeen to the Potteries. We all remember the outcries raised by the Tories on the occasion of the casual riots at Bristol, at Birmingham, and Monmouth. They spoke as if the country could never be safe, as if no honest man could sleep in his bed, while Lord Grey or Lord Melbourne was at the head of affairs,

and yet these were breaches of the peace, confined to single spots, and were not allowed to spread, being quelled almost as soon as heard of. But during the whole month of September, 1842, our very manufacturing existence was at stake. We know not what means there were for obtaining previous information of the plans of the Chartists; but we do know that the disturbances were confined for some time to Staffordshire, and that no sufficient measures of conciliation or repression were applied to stop them there, nor any additional precautions taken to guard against them elsewhere. Finally the military were poured in, and the temper of the Chartists proved much less destructive than might have been expected.

This was the first insurrection under the Conservative government, and was of a more dangerous and extensive nature than any that has occurred in England for the last fifty years. The second followed within less than six months, and has as yet been less extensive, but greatly more obstinate; for now for nearly a year the southern counties of Wales have been exposed to organized bands, that with open violence have eluded and defied extinction. Once or twice they have held forth dangerous temptations for a second Chartist co-operative rising, which if combined with the monster demonstrations in Ireland, might go far to shake the stability of the empire. That we have hitherto escaped such a catastrophe is in no degree due, either to the fore-

sight or to the energy of the Government, which for months was content to trust to chance and to a "Times" reporter for counsel and information. Finally, a commission has been appointed to inquire into the grievances of the Welch farmers and peasantry. We trust it may allay them. For we confess we like not the long smouldering fires and banded defiances of Rebecca, and fear lest the evil example of a rural war spread to other parts; and the country be taught by experience that the way to obtain commissions of inquiry, and redress of grievances, is by violence and incendiarism. 'Twere better to examine the disease and apply the remedy before the fever breaks out. But this is not Tory practice, whose nostrum is, leave things alone.

Another symptom of the disease of Sir Robert Peel's government is to be found in the spreading power and organization of an immense Anti-Corn Law League, embracing the whole area of the country, raising first fifty and now a hundred thousand pounds, and carrying with it a strong weight of popular favour even in its efforts to interfere with the ordinary working of Parliamentary elections. When steady, wealthy firms, from all the great seats of our manufacturing districts, and whose members are usually glad to keep aloof from the turmoil of politics and elections, embark in such a league as this, and when year after year it goes on increasing in funds, in numbers, in respectability, and in its acceptance with the public, we may be certain that

it has much reason and justice on its side, and the Government that has provoked its growth has been in error.

Thus much for the preservation of the peace in England. In Scotland there has been less of riot; but a destructive SCHISM has been consummated in one of the purest and most meritorious of Churches. This is no place to enter into the Scotch Church disputes; but this we know, that Lord Aberdeen frequently taunted Lord Melbourne with not settling them, when he knew that Lord Melbourne was powerless for such a purpose in the Lords; and that Lord Aberdeen, with something of an Irish misconception of time, brought in a bill last session to heal the dispute *after* the great secession and schism had been effected.

But if the reaction Ministry, in two years' government, has been illustrated by schism in Scotland and two insurrections in England, what shall be said of its success IN IRELAND. Sir Robert Peel was for once no false prophet, when he declared in 1839, speaking of his accession to office, "Ireland will be my difficulty." And he was more candid than usual, when, on May last, he confessed, "*Ireland was tranquil two years ago* (under the Whigs) *and is now most disturbed.*" This was a painful confession, and a strong but tardy testimony to the good fruits of that government of his predecessors, which he had so perseveringly thwarted and denounced. But the fact was undeniable; and denial no longer

so needful. What proof, indeed, of increasing tranquillity can be stronger, than the diminution from year to year of troops stationed in Ireland, from 24,000 in 1833, to 15,000 in 1840, and only 13,447 in 1841.

Or if we take the reported evidence of fourteen Irish agents, largely connected with the sale and management of land throughout Ireland, who declared that since 1835, great improvements and investments had taken place in Irish property, and that it had risen *five years purchase* in value. But what is its condition now? Who will buy land? Who will lend money on mortgage? Who will invest capital in improvements there now? Hear a description of it.

"A dreadful commotion distracts the public mind "in Ireland—a feverish agitation, and unnatural "excitement prevail to a degree scarcely credible "throughout the entire country—social intercourse "is poisoned there in its very springs—family is "divided against family, and man against his neigh- "bour. In a word, the bands of social life are "almost dissevered—the fountains of public justice "are corrupted—the spirit of discord walks openly "abroad, and an army of physical force is marshalled "in defiance of all law to the imminent danger of the "public peace."

Is this a faithful description? If it is, it is prophetic, for it is Sir Robert Peel's own picture of the state of Ireland, under his own government, not in 1843, but in 1828. Let him compare that picture

with the tranquillized state of Ireland under Lord Normanby, or Lord Fortescue, and blush for the calumnies he sanctioned in Parliament against their governments. Let him compare the thriving and friendly state of Ireland in 1841, with that to which he has again reduced it in 1843, and then ask himself, where are the fruits of his conservatism, his boasted statesmanship and good government. Let us hear too the deliberate opinion of by far the ablest supporter of his government amongst the journals, and at the same time by far the bitterest opponent of the Whigs. The "Times" says on the 8th or 9th of May:—

Never, we really believe, did any Viceroy—certainly not any Conservative Viceroy—enter upon the Government of that country with such favourable dispositions on the part of all classes of the people, or with such singular opportunities of doing good. The population was paving the way to habits of industry and forethought. *O'Connell had dwindled down into a mere doting driveller—a man of maces and gold chains—comparatively powerless in Ireland, and in England almost forgotten.* The Repeal doctrines and Repeal associations were heard of only to be laughed at everywhere as a transparent fallacy, resorted to for the purpose of keeping up the "rent." In Lord de Grey and Lord Eliott, personally, the greatest confidence was felt and expressed by all whose support appeared to be important for any practical purpose.

Such were the advantages under which that Government, which is now menaced with nothing less than actual insurrection, assumed office in Ireland. *In two years they have contrived so to govern the country, that, for the first time, the masses of the people are beginning to make formidable demonstrations in favour of the merely Irish principle of separation from Great Britain.* O'Connell, who was then a dotard, is now a giant

again. A people labouring under unexampled distress send in their £600. a week to the Repeal Fund, contributing generally in the inverse ratio of their means. The rabble of Repealers is joined by respectable and well-intentioned persons, and an insignificant faction has become a powerful party. In all this there is neither *Whiggery* nor *Radicalism*, no pursuit of Roman Catholic as opposed to Protestant interests;—it aims at being, and almost threatens to become, a national movement.

Lord Eliott too, the highest authority on Irish matters, admitted, on the 24th of June, "*that in consequence of the tranquillity of Ireland,*" *on the accession of the Government* he had reduced eight stipendiary magistrates. But most of these are now restored or replaced, and instead of the 13,447 troops, having comparatively nothing to do, we have, besides a large reserve force of pensioners, above 30,000 disciplined troops, busily employed in fortifying their stations, cutting loop-holes in their barracks, laying in stores of provisions and ammunition to stand a siege, fortifying Dublin Castle, marching to church armed, and laden with 60 rounds of ball cartridge each; supported too, by a fleet hovering around the coast, war steamers in every bay and gun-boats on the lakes. In fact, all the precautions are taken that the Duke of Wellington would think necessary in an enemy's country—and that country against which these forces are now directed is his own*—is ours,—is, or ought to be, as much a part

* It is deeply to be regretted, that from the day of his advancement the Duke of Wellington has never revisited his native country; never mentioned it with affection, nor that we can remember, ever publicly acknowledged it as his own. Had he

and parcel of the kingdom, as Wales, or Yorkshire, or Middlesex. Martial law has not yet been proclaimed; but it is undeniable that Ireland is at this moment held much less by law and by allegiance than by military force. Do we blame these precautions? No, certainly not, in the state to which Ireland is now brought. And into what a state is it brought! Converted into a huge garrison or prepared battle-field; and all the rays of prosperity that were opening on it, and reflected on England not three years ago, now blighted and blackened. And whom have we to thank for this? Surely not solely Mr. O'Connell and the repealers. No; there may be faction with a solemn face and sanctimonious protestations quite as mischievous as with coarse and blustering violence. But in the state in which the Irish now are, we are glad for their sakes, as well as for the general security of the empire, that there is so powerful a military force so ably stationed and commanded, as to render hopeless, and thereby improbable, any great national outbreak.

But it is not by an outbreak or open violence that the Irish leaders look to gain their ends, but by wearing out in detail, and by passive resistance. How would this mighty military force, backed by all the courts of law, and searching acts of parliament, be able to collect Saxon taxes and anti-

chosen to take Ireland by the hand, how much good might not this truly great and powerful man have effected; how much, even of bitter envy and animosity might he have soothed, had he worn his glory as an Irishman.

repealer's rent from hundreds of thousands, or a million or two of defaulters, should affairs be driven on by reciprocal pride and resistance to such a pass as passive non-payment? And how long would small anti-repeal resident landlords be able to withstand such a repeal argument. And how would the English Exchequer like reimbursing the loyal resisters from year to year?

We all remember the million advanced to the Irish clergy in lieu of their uncollectable tithes, and how the tithe war under combined civil and military powers miserably failed. Or now, how would this army in Ireland act efficiently if it were for months harassed in detail, worn out by perpetual marchings and countermarchings, in remote and difficult districts; called out to put down paltry riots and breaches of the peace, sometimes real, and far more frequently fictitious, reported for the express purpose of throwing ridicule on the soldiers, and creating dissatisfaction amongst them? Even on a small scale Rebecca and her daughters for months foiled both a military and a civil force. And again, how long would our soldiers and officers like waging a war upon the cabin: passing through the whole calamitous circle of distraints, seizures, hangings, burnings, famine, pestilence? And how long would this country bear it? Let us also consider, as it is not humane, so neither is it prudent to run further risks with neighbouring and kindred millions, for revolt is catching; and should it cross the channel, there are even now seeds of mischief not unsown. It were

sheerest folly and cowardice to shut our eyes to these and similar considerations. Let not therefore "fine old English country gentlemen," who sit at home at ease, think that a word of command, a sic volo, sic jubeo, will settle this matter. Let them not be too eager to drive the repealers to desperate measures, to the creating mischief for mischief's sake, trusting to chance, — and there are many awkward things that chance might throw up, abroad as well as at home,—to aid them in their revolt. Let them remember there are above two millions* of Irish paupers, destitute of nearly all the appliances that render existence desirable, who, having therefore little or nothing to lose, have as little to fear, and something to hope from a general disturbance. The very occupation of disturbance is attractive to their desperate objectless thoughts. There is at least another million, very little removed above these two millions, and acted upon, therefore, though less strongly, by the same temptations. Given this uneasy multitude, this mass of suffering life, what mischief might it not commit in any country. But make it Irish—the nation of all others the most reckless of consequences, and the most inflammable, and add to it the bitter infusion of religious fanaticism, (to make it lasting), and then say what mischief might it not produce!! and how carefully ought it not to be watched and sheltered from dangerous influences, and yet you talk of putting it down, quelling it, dis-

* The Poor Law Commissioners state that there are 2,385,000 destitute persons in Ireland.

persing it, with as many holiday and lady terms as you would whip a truant school boy.

You centre it all in Mr. O'Connell, and when you have poured out a torrent of abuse upon him, you fancy you have done great things and settled the matter, but this is sheer folly, or worse than folly, —dishonest evasion. Masses do not rise at the call of one man. It requires years and breadth of suffering before its murmurs find a voice, and that voice an echo. Mr. O'Connell is but this echo. In himself, able and eloquent and experienced though he be, he is as nothing, it is in the masses of Ireland that the heart of the disease lies, and there it must be softened and cured. However much it may startle some, we think those who have most considered national discontents in a free country, and who wish to see freedom preserved, will rejoice that there is a Mr. O'Connell, a man of substance and vigor, with far-spread relations and having much to lose by disorder, who can for a time stand between us and an angry people.

This then is the altered state of Ireland, and the charge against Sir Robert Peel and his party is, that he and they, quite as much as Mr. O'Connell, have caused it. In the debate on Mr. O'Brien's motion, he said,

"What has my Ministry done to justify or excuse "this state of affairs in Ireland? What are our acts "of oppression; wherein have we misgoverned or "perverted the law, or oppressed the Catholics?"--If

the whole charge were included within these narrow limits, it might not easily be substantiated. For it is not a few isolated offences committed within a brief space, but a course of injurious and oppressive treatment, persisted in for years, that alienates a whole people, and wearing out their endurance, sets them at issue with peace and authority. Therefore knowing this full well, Sir Robert Peel in his defence cunningly and instinctively kept it out of sight. He knows as well as any man, better than most men, for he has already struggled against and been defeated by it—the great mass of Irish misery, discontent, and inflammability which we have been describing. For nineteen years of his life he set his face against it. For six years as Irish Secretary, he brought in arms bills—bills for the better, that is more bitter, execution of the laws—gave power to Courts of Magistrates to dispense with trials by jury—opposed tithe commutation—tithe amendment bills—voted and declaimed against Catholic Emancipation—and went so far as to declare in Parliament "that the only fault of the Orange Societies "was their exuberance of loyalty." As Home Secretary he pursued the same course; yet still, despite all these legislative enactments and coercions he found Irish discontent growing even faster than his official growth, and strengthening more than his Parliamentary strength. We have cited his description of the nearly savage state to which this *vigorous* government of his reduced, and in which

it kept Ireland. But when things arrived at a crisis, when the measure of endurance was full to the brim, ere the last drop made the waters of bitterness overflow, he had the prudence to give way ; and the Emancipation Act was passed.

Now this was either an accomplished fact whence a new policy was to flow, or it was an accomplished dead letter — a mere subterfuge and expedient. Either the Catholics were to be treated thereafter on a footing of perfect equality with the Protestants, in all official employments and patronage, (save the offices specially excepted) and in all civil immunities and franchises, or the compact was broken, and Emancipation practically not yet passed. Sir Robert Peel will of course declare that he passed the act in all sincerity, and with a determination to fulfil it. If this be so, it is unfortunate for himself, and for both England and Ireland, that he did not act up to his determination. For soon finding himself in opposition, old Anti-Catholic associations returned upon him; or party spirit blinded him to the obvious results of the course he then adopted of making the Anti-Catholic and Anti-Irish feeling, already too prevalent in England, the immediate stepping-stone to his reconciliation with the English Tories, and to his proximate return to power. The revolt of Ireland has been the inheritance of his ambition, and the dismemberment of the empire may be its reversion.

He must have seen, as no one could well avoid

seeing, that the utmost forbearance and gentleness towards the inflamed Catholics, were necessary to calm them down after their victory, leaving individual excesses to be repressed with a firm hand; and that it was imperative both in honour and in policy, to give clear and practical proofs of the working and following out of the Emancipation Act. Instead of which he and his party, with two or three honourable exceptions, took their stand upon the old Orange Anti-Catholic grounds. This gained them friends in England, and accordingly they redoubled their attacks upon the policy that was soothing the irritability, and even winning the affections of the Irish—Was not a little further exclusion from office worth purchasing, at the golden prospect of seeing Ireland really united to England? Were not the reforms and the administration that were applied to Ireland by the Whigs, such as necessarily flowed from the Emancipation and Reform acts, and such as she would inevitably either sooner and thankfully receive from friends, or later wrench by violence and disturbance from opponents. But these sober reflections were thrown aside; the Church cry was up; now was the time to take advantage of it; and so down with the ministry supported by the Irish members, away with the O'Connell-ridden government! This was their tactic, and these their cries; and they succeeded. And they who did this now ask, What have we done? The Irish can answer them fully and in detail. They can say, You urged on the Coercion Bill;

you opposed our Reform Bill, and specially on anti-Catholic grounds; you endeavoured, after England and Scotland were freed from their corrupt skeleton corporations, to fix ours upon us as "strongholds of Protestantism;" you protested against the national education of our children, except upon terms that would have excluded every Catholic; you opposed the curtailment of your over-grown and nearly sinecure Church, for the sake of keeping up sentinels, as you said, on the Catholics; and you opposed even releasing the Catholics from the Church cess; you clamoured against the appointment of Catholics to some, even of the lowest, situations in the ministry; and when a Roman Catholic gentleman, one of the most eloquent members of the House of Commons, was made a Privy Councillor, some of your party spoke of it as a breach of the Constitution; and your Queen's coronation oath began to be questioned. Others more violent, and amongst them beneficed clergymen, at public dinners and meetings, went so far as to reflect on the Queen herself, for the support she gave her Catholic subjects; and did you rebuke them for this indecency? On the contrary, you countenanced them, and some were promoted almost immediately afterwards? Your leading party newspaper denounced our priests as "surpliced ruffians," while your present Lord Chancellor has not only called but legislated against us as aliens. After the elections in 1837, you formed a Spottiswoode association, of wealthy persons having generally no connection with Ireland, to raise a fund with which

to oppress and intimidate our members, by encouraging and defraying the expense of indiscriminate petitions against their returns. Following up this attempt to crush our representatives, one of your now leading Cabinet Ministers denounced our constituencies as masses of personation, corruption and perjury; and thereon, with reckless party violence thrust forward a registration bill, which in defiance of all justice and remonstrance, he declared would admit of no delay, and which would in fact have half disfranchised Ireland. He and you would have carried it too, but for the dissolution of Parliament. Yet now you yourselves confess that this was a mere party move, and that it certainly would have greatly diminished the already diminishing numbers of our constituents, and that instead of admitting of no delay, your cry, at the end of three years, is that still further delay is necessary. Thus it is you treat us, and then with folded arms and solemn face, say, What have we done? We have told you. And we tell you further that thus it is repealers are made, and Mr. O'Connell's hands played into by rendering it now almost impossible for any party to satisfy Ireland without incensing England, or to please England without driving Ireland to the verge, or within the verge, of rebellion.

If you ask us Why we distrust your still? our answer is, Because we see nothing in you changed. You cannot easily turn 350,000 children out of their schools, and repeal the Education, the Emancipa-

tion, the Reform, and the Municipal Acts. But by your official power and patronage you can do much to neutralize or pervert them. You can select all your judges, and bishops, and magistrates, from those amongst your party, who are most notorious for their opposition not only to the passing of those Acts, but *to the working of them after they are passed.* You can swamp our municipal magistracies, under a pretence of keeping up a balance of parties.* And even now with the repeal movement, threatening the disruption of the empire, your Government cannot conquer its habit of sneering and insulting. Your Home Secretary can go out of his way on an important debate, so to speak of the Emancipation Act and of the Catholics, as to be obliged the next day to explain, he did not quite mean to accuse them of perjury. And your papers taking up the cue, redouble and exaggerate these insults. Whooping for insurrection, inflaming excitement, and chuckling over warlike preparations with the appetite of Owhyhee, rather than the assumed civilization of England.

Hear your especial ministerial organ, the Herald, speak of the priests so late as the 23rd of September,

* Sir James Graham has done the same also in England, under the same pretence, nominating shoals of additional borough magistrates where none were wanted, except for party purposes. What an outcry would not the country have heard, and justly, had the Whigs attempted to *counterbalance the Tory magistracies in all the counties* by like arbitrary nominations.

when several of the most highly influential and respectable amongst them had not yet declared for repeal. By way of retaining them, it says, "The fire-"brands let loose by Samson were mild scourges com-"pared with the incendiaries who are now vomited "forth from Maynooth, to convey desolation through "the land." Or take a sketch of the whole nation, from the Times, November 27th. "There is no "extremity of rashness—no excess (unhappily) of "crime—no enormity of falsehood by which a "race so restless, so sanguine, and so shallow, have "ever at any time been deterred, or shocked, or "awakened to a sense of duty, or of rational or "moral truth. Their political idolatry is no less "blind than their superstition." And a few days later it calls them Thugs, "Irish Thugs."

We ask any dispassionate man, we care not of what party, whether it is in deeds and terms and tones like these from Ministers and a ministerial press, (we could cite volumes of like or worse abuse from all their papers) that an excited priesthood and an angry people are to be won back to the ways of peace? or the English taught to regard Ireland and Irish affairs with feelings of humane and Christian forbearance? It is not enough to answer that the leaders disavow or explain these things away. They are repeated too perseveringly for such an excuse. And the Irish, like the rest of the the world, say: "like master, like man;" the party and ministerial press that so violently and unre-

mittingly abuse us, cannot but be doing that which is acceptable to their leaders and ministers.

If these facts are true, and who is there that calmly reviewing the past, and honestly accepting the Emancipation Act as a reality, can or will deny them, then it necessarily follows that Sir Robert Peel and his party have, by their direct and indirect proceedings, during the last fourteen years, done quite as much as Mr. O'Connell and his agitators towards fomenting and embittering the present insurrectionary movement in Ireland.

Let us now examine how they have encountered this monster of their own ambitious nursing. The excitement did not assume a definite form until last Easter, when the first monster meeting began, —just fourteen years after the origin of Repeal under the Duke of Wellington's government in 1829. As the Duke of Wellington neglected to nip it in its bud, so Sir Robert Peel let pass the first great physical demonstration. They probably were right in both cases; but in neither case did they act according to the declared and received principles of their government, and they would strongly have blamed any opponents who neglected what they then neglected. At Easter there were clearly two methods of treatment. Either to attempt to arrest the movement at once by a firm but temperate hand; or to suffer it to wear itself out for want of food to feed on, or if it waxed stronger, to wait for some distinct overt act that would place its leaders palpably

within the operation of the laws. The Government seems to have vacillated between both these methods. First it affected the waiting system, and let the monster meetings go on, while a little interlude was preparing. For on an incidental notice in Parliament, Sir Robert Peel went out of his way to make use of his Sovereign's name with regard to Repeal, paraphrasing a message of William the IVth's under the Whigs, but omitting the clause respecting the redress of wrongs, which, to say the least, was disingenuous and mischievous. The use made of the Queen's name was, it seems, designed for a covered and characteristic attack upon the Repealers. For, on the strength of the words then used, the Irish Lord Chancellor opened a masked paper battery, and proceeded to supersede all magistrates who attended Repeal meetings, while at the same time he carefully abstained from declaring them illegal. This fillip set up the monster meetings and the Repeal rent. The one began to be counted by hundreds of thousands of persons: and the other rose from hundreds to thousands of pounds. The language, too, used, became more violent, the organization more regular, and the priesthood gave signs of joining as a body.

This excitement reacted on England, and there were long debates in Parliament on Irish matters. The Government would promise nothing but an impartial administration of the laws, and proposed nothing but the renewal, with very much increased severities, of the Irish Arms Bill, which had practi-

cally become nearly a dead letter, and which is now being used by Irish Tory magistrates, as might have been foreseen, for party purposes. Later in the session a bill was passed for forming the military pensioners, in case of need, into an army of reserve. The session closed, and the monster meetings went on unchecked, from Connemara to Tara Hill, Mullaghmast and Clontarf. No, not Clontarf. But the Repeal rent was beginning to fall off a little; notwithstanding a superabundance of declarations, manifestoes, denunciations of Saxons, and subordinate meetings. For the heartiest things will wear out; and the most admiring audience tire at last of the same thing. And so it was with the Saxon denunciations and monster meetings. Even Mr. O'Connell's wonderful versatility began to grow thread bare for the want—of the next step. But to take this neither suited his objects nor his disposition. Yet it was difficult to stand still amidst such tumultuous waters—to say unto them thus far and no further. There were signs of ripening impatience, dissatisfaction and insubordination in his camp and his cabinet. He complained at Lismore that even some of his priests were going too fast—that he who had hitherto been the exciter, must become, henceforth, the restrainer,—there were parishes erased from the Repeal rolls for quarrelling with policemen; there were members violently expelled from the council and ranks of Repeal for making motions against rent. What next? and when? and why not now? were querulously asked

and not easily answered. The Government began to stand a fair chance of reaping the benefit of its able preparations against danger, coupled with the wise abstinence since the recess from all direct offence to the repealers. Opinion was growing towards it; and Mr. O'Connell and his followers, vexed by their own big words, were nearly stalemated. The next move and they might be in check. In the midst of this dilemma, not seeing his way clearly and safely before him; loath to advance and without an excuse for receding—when all looked blank, dangerous, and perplexed.

> Nec Deus intersit, nisi dignus vindice nodus
> Inciderit.

Mr. O'Connell found relief where, perhaps, he all along calculated upon finding it. Lord de Grey and the Government rushed in, knocked over the chess board, and the stalemate was saved.

Advantages were never more foolishly thrown away, and a frightful effusion of blood was never more weakly and wantonly risked than by the headlong anti-Clontarf proclamation.

The old proverb says, 'a miss is as good as a mile.' And as all went off peaceably at Clontarf, we shall probably hear little more of it. But had strife there began, and blood once been shed, who shall say where it would have ended.—It would have been as the pouring out of waters,—and every drop should have been visited on the heads of those, who, on Saturday evening, issued an unexpected proclamation against the monster meeting of the following morn-

ing. Thus as it were entrapping some hundreds of thousands of highly excited individuals, who, without let, or stay, or prohibition, had been accustomed for months to attend similar meetings, and who had a right therefore to believe them legal, and many of whom were then actually on their way to Clontarf. Upon every principle of common humanity, if not of liberty and fair play, most especial care should have been taken to warn those misguided men, long before hand, of the consequences of their conduct. But nothing of this kind was done or thought of.

Again, what so undignified or so uncalled for as a Lord-Lieutenant, expected in Yorkshire to drill his hussars, suddenly and without any new feature whatever in the course of repeal, being packed off by Government, with a foul copy proclamation, stuffed into his breeches pocket, and steamed away to Dublin, to arrive on the Thursday night, to pass all Friday haggling with his council, and then, on the Saturday evening, to come forth with a proclamation declaring those meetings illegal, which had hitherto been treated as not illegal, and especially a meeting which it was now physically impossible to prevent from more or less forming. And once assembled, in the temper in which it would then have met, the commonest accident, a mere quarrel, or chance medley, would have ruined all.

It was Mr. O'Connell and the repeal leaders, and not the Government, that did the Government duty by instantly and indefatigably warning, far and wide, tens, and twenties, and fifties of thousands

from attending that meeting; and to* their strenuous exertions, prolonged through the whole night, and following morning, we are indebted, most probably, for preservation from a cruel shedding of blood, and the outburst of a ferocious and vindictive rebellion.

But at all events Mr. O'Connell owed the Government a good turn for having got him out of his monster meeting difficulties, and he thus repaid them by saving them from the fearful consequences of their precipitant folly. Nothing could exceed the unblushing ability with which he covered his own too rapid advance by the false move of the Government. He instantly did that which he had long been desiring to do—anchored. Thus far he had advanced the Repeal movement, and he was enabled now, without in the least retreating, and without in the least compromising his onward character as a leader to say—"For the present, no further." Rapidly and effectually he brought his ship to an anchor, under the the lee of the Government proclamation; and he has now time and authority again to attend to its internal organization for a future move—to watch the course of events—and to accustom the public mind to the existence of the advanced stage of his *imperium in imperio.*

The present Ministers are not likely again to have

* One of them, the Rev. Mr. Tyrrel, since indicted for sedition, and since dead, is said to have caught his death illness by his exertions during that perilous night.

the good chance that their Clontarf proclamation threw away. At Easter they neglected to act on their own assumed *vigorous* principles of putting down the repeal demonstrations with a resolute hand; and in the autumn, they wanted the comprehension to understand, or the firmness to wait for, the results of the passive policy into which they were much more forced than willing to enter. One fault begets another. Having forbidden the Clontarf meeting by the bare commands of Government, it became necessary to fortify its proceedings by the authority of law; and hence the legal proceedings against Mr. O'Connell and the Repealers. But, as the prohibition of the meeting rested on no special grounds, but on cumulative presumptions, so the indictment against the Repealers could stand only on the same indefinite basis. And so the Government by its petulant impatience has engaged itself in legal proceedings, of which no one can see the end, but of which many immediate and remote mischiefs are but too apparent.

In the first place, constructive sedition is as foreign to our notions of fair play as the exploded doctrine of constructive treason. Yet it constitutes the very essence of the charges preferred against the Repealers, with the further objection that all which they are charged with saying and doing, they said and did openly and unchecked at the time by the authorities. There is an insidiousness in thus accumulating offences and fattening them for punishment, against which fair play and justice revolt.

Then again, will Irish excitement be calmed (except through sheer weariness) by instituting trials of the leaders of that excitement, not upon clear single points, the bearing and the conviction upon which all could comprehend, but upon indictments running over a period of eight months, referring to proceedings which may require as many thousand witnesses, and composed of eleven counts, the very first of which covers fifty-five closely printed folio pages. The monster meetings are aptly met by monster indictments. The nearest resemblance to it is the old Tory green bag full of cumulative charges raked up against Queen Caroline.

Further also, the Government has, greatly for the present advantage of Mr. O'Connell and Repeal, removed the site and the centre of its agitation, from the bleak and dangerous hill side, to the secure and far speaking four courts of Dublin. From their halls, Mr. O'Connell, with his powerful array of legal assistants, will be able to work out his Irish questions; and after holding up the Government to derision for two months, will probably send it to Parliament with defeat. A conviction would probably be even more disastrous than an acquittal.

In the present state of the Irish mind, would the Government venture to imprison Mr. O'Connell? How would it meet the emergency that might thence arise? And what justification would it have for precipitating or risking it? And yet how feeble would it show, if, after all its preparations, it dared not imprison him. It lost its best chance of escape

when the errors and bewilderment of its law officers nearly quashed the proceedings; and its hope now is that the Jury may never agree. Indeed it would be no easy matter for any twelve persons to agree upon a detailed history of eight months of Irish proceedings, and upon the bearing of which the Government itself was for eight months divided, or at least undecided. And so now the best ministerial hope is, as indeed the bewildering charges seem purposely framed to secure its fulfilment, that there shall be no verdict. For then there would be a pretext raised for the old favourite practice of coming to Parliament to ask for extraordinary powers to do what is called, vindicate the law and strengthen the hands of Government. Meanwhile these proceedings have, like the attack upon the magistrates, rallied the repeal rent; and the prosecution, by giving Mr. O'Connell the appearance, rather than the reality, of being persecuted, has raised his own special fund — the O'Connell rent—from £15,000. to above £25,000. And when the trial is over, if it ever will be over—what then? how much nearer shall we be to the settlement of Ireland? What's to be done?

Remedies.

These are questions much more easily asked than answered. But having now examined the course of the Government, both as it regards the empire at large, and more especially Ireland, and having had the easy task of finding much to blame, we will attempt the far more difficult one of suggesting re-

medies. To begin with IRELAND. We cannot commence better than by quoting the following extract, from an old address to the people of England and Ireland, which was signed by some of the most influential, most experienced, and most respected Irish resident landlords: it was headed by the Duke of Leinster, and declared,—

"The great mass of the people in Great Britain "is Protestant; in Ireland, Roman Catholic. "Whoever therefore, attempts to set Protestants "against Roman Catholics, labours in effect to set "Great Britain against Ireland, and by consequence, "Ireland against Great Britain."

These are truisms to which all will readily enough assent in words, but to which, as we have seen, the present Ministers, whether in office or in opposition, have unfortunately very little attended in deeds; and hence the disastrous, or to say the least, erroneous state of affairs in Ireland. Now one of the best cures for error is a departure from it—but in the right direction. And if the wrong direction has been the setting Catholics and Protestants against one another, then its reverse, the bringing them together and reconciling them, will probably be the right. Substituting, in fact, for bigotry, a respect for each other's religion—for coercion and hostility, concession and friendship—and for exclusion, inclusion, that is a frank participation in all rights, benefits, and advantages. This was tried by the Whigs, and so far as it was suffered by the Tories to be applied, was successful. Let

then the Tories now try it; as the only safe policy by which, carried out in all practical sincerity, and not with mere lip phrase, any Government can hope hereafter to maintain permanent peace in Ireland.

But to come to closer particulars; and first for the Church. The CHURCH and the PRIESTS, the question of questions. Now there is an old text in our copy books, which is appropriate to this subject, "Be just and fear not;" we all have often written it out in somewhat scrawled German text, let us now, ere it be too late, write it out fairly and honestly in our Statute books. Let us do this, and place beside it the holy caution, of "not to do to another that which we would not that other should do unto us;" and guided by these two plainest and best of rules, which are as true in politics as in private life, and following them out honestly in all their consequences, we may yet right ourselves, and be perhaps the happier and more prosperous for our troubles. But if presuming to be more wise, and more just, that is, more subtle, than justice and wisdom themselves, we think fit to deal in expediencies, qualifications, reservations, and the whole army of ifs, and ands, and buts, which are nothing more than the cobwebs in which spider injustice and selfishness love to lie hid, we shall waste our time, lose our tempers, and perhaps too, lose Ireland. Once more then, be just and fear not, and learn to do to Ireland, as you would that Ireland should do to you, were you Catholic Ireland, and Ireland Protestant England. But to do this effectually requires the calming

down of many angry feelings, the humbling of pride, the setting aside deep-rooted prejudices or predilections, and the resigning the direction of spiritual affairs to higher authority than man's, or man's short-sighted policy.

When we have weighed these thoughts, we may ask, whether we believe, that if the Irish Roman Catholic priests, had an assured, and permanent position, and were to a certain degree independent of their flocks, they would not teach and control them with more effect,—that men of more general information, more liberal sentiments, and of higher station, would not enter the priesthood, and that the whole tone and feeling of the Irish Catholics would not be raised? Who would not answer? Certainly. Then if this be so, is it not also most desirable? again we must answer, certainly. What, or who then prevents it? Ourselves—England—Parliament—the Lords and Commons of England. But if we of Protestant England belonged to some powerful Catholic state, that had appropriated our national religious endowments, and we were so poor that we could with difficulty maintain out of our destitution, a dependant and ill-educated clergy; should we not desire that such Catholic state should provide funds to assist in the endowment of our ministries, and the education of our clergy, without at all interfering with the independence of our Church? Undoubtedly we should in our calmer moments. Is it not therefore our duty so to do by the Irish Catholics, as we, if we

were French Protestants, should wish the French Government to do by us; and as, in fact, the French Government does by its Protestants. We may regret that the Irish Catholics are not Protestants, as Catholics regret that Protestants are not Catholics; but these regrets are not to prevent either of us from fulfilling the higher duties of justice and mercy, which require, that we should do all in our power to relieve the wants and enlighten the darkness of our neighbours. But we have already admitted, that we *should* relieve their wants and enlighten their darkness, by promoting the education and independence of their clergy. Therefore upon the plain principles of Christian charity, and of doing to our neighbours as we would that they should do unto us,—it becomes our bounden duty to relieve and enlighten them.

If it be objected by some, that we should thereby be fostering error by educating it. We reply,—who made us the judges and correctors of error? Let us do good, and be content, humbly to look to that good which is in all! Was not the heathen centurion commended, who built a synagogue for what he believed to be the mistaken worship of the Jews, and most highly distinguished too on the report of this act of charity, by the miracle performed forthwith upon his servant? Let us go and do likewise. And, if the Catholics be in error, are not their errors likely to diminish, by enlightenment, and by the example of our charity? Is not

enlightenment the very test by which we desire that our own profession should be tried? Also, if all Christian sects have failed to convert one another by violence, compulsion, jealousy, and exclusion, — which have produced only hypocrisy, hatred, and wars,—is it not worth while trying what a little love and forbearance will do? And, after all, so long as there are different phases of the human mind, so long will truth strike them under different angles, and reflect different rays of light,—different persuasions,—which are probably all wisely permitted and prolonged, for the exercise of our inquiries, our faith, and, above all, our charity.

We have placed this matter, of the support of the Irish Catholic Church, on these high grounds of Christian justice, because we wish to separate it from all party expediency and temporizing measures. But for those who choose to take it up, and examine it in a mere worldly and political point of view, let us ask, Who is there that does not at once see the inestimable social benefit that would accrue from uniting the Catholic priesthood in bonds of amity and mutual favours with the laws and the constitution, and from enabling them, on future occasions, to withstand popular delusions, or at least to act on their own conscientious convictions, by relieving them from a dependance for their subsistence on popular pay.

We have no thought of recommending the coarse and insolent proposal of buying over the priests,

and making them stipendiaries, were they base enough (which they are in no degree) to sell their holy offices for messes of pottage. We should gain nothing by such a transaction; we should but damage both ourselves and them by corruption. No! —that good fruits may come of it, we must give as they must receive, purely and independently. On such terms we hope and trust the Irish Catholic Clergy and community may even yet, on reflection, be brought gradually to acquiesce in reconciliation, recognition, and assistance. The amount of pecuniary assistance, and the terms of raising, securing, and appropriating it,—the co-operating aid of the Catholics themselves, and of Catholic land,—the establishing glebe-houses, and the enlargement and re-organization of Maynooth, and other minor points are all questions of detail, into which it would be needless and premature yet to enter.

Taking the subject in its very lowest sense, as a mere matter of pounds, shillings, and pence, who will not now agree that it would be cheap and prudent to expend half a million, or a million, in raising and reconciling a nation, *now united* to our own, and possessing a population much larger than that with which, little more than a century ago, we humbled Louis XIV. Would not this be better economy than interrupting all national improvement, and hazarding millions on the coarse and vulgar charges of horse and foot artillery, brigades of cavalry, divisions of infantry, squadrons of ships,

flotillas of steam-boats, intrenchments, and fortified houses and barracks, bristling the whole country, with all the costly and barbarous array of the worst possible tenure by which a kingdom can be held,—a tenure in which humanity, liberty, civilization, and religion all harden and suffer.

There would be many difficulties, of course, on the one side and on the other, attending the settlement of this great question, but they would be found to be only difficulties, many of which would vanish, and all sensibly diminish, whenever the matter was taken up, as Catholic Emancipation at last was, in good earnest.

Catholic France pays and recognizes the ministers of its Protestant subjects, and at this moment has a Protestant Prime Minister.

So also does Catholic Austria.

Protestant Prussia pays and recognizes the ministers of her Catholic subjects. And let us think how tyrannical, intolerant, and insane, we should call Prussia, were she to treat and denounce the religion and priests of her Rhenish, as we treat and denounce the religion and priests of our Irish dominions.

In Saxony a Catholic king rules popularly over Protestants, respecting their religion and its privileges.

In Belgium a Protestant king rules popularly over Catholics, respecting their religion and its privileges.

Throughout Germany and Switzerland, Protes-

tants and Catholics, Catholics and Protestants live together in Christian harmony, with mutual respect for each other's creeds, offices and endowments.

Shall all these, and other good examples which we might cite from the best and most civilized portions of Europe, be thrown away upon England? Will she prefer imitating the exclusive bigotry of Spain, Portugal, and the Italian States?

Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville wished to pay the Catholic priests; Lord Castlereagh desired it; and at last even the High Church Quarterly Review has discovered that an endowment for the Catholic priests should have attended the Emancipation Act, and that the Emancipation Act should have attended the Union. The misfortune is, that Conservative anti-progress anti-reform authorities are in these matters wise only after the event,—after mischief has instructed them. But even this would be worth much if they would *act* up to their new conversions. For although it is sadly late—three and forty embittering years too late—yet let us hope it is not too late, and that the redress and relief which Protestant England, at length seeing her error, shall offer, in all sincerity and without restriction, will, by Catholic Ireland be accepted with honour and cemented by good faith and good will.

Another pressing matter is the consideration of IRISH TENANCY, and of the duties as well as of the

rights of Irish landlords. But happily there is now less occasion to enforce this subject, since there seems to be a general disposition to meet it dispassionately, and the Government has issued a commission for collecting information against the meeting of Parliament. We should have been better pleased with this commission if, instead of being composed exclusively of Irish landlords, there had been associated with them some independent persons practically acquainted with the letting, working, and profits of farms and small tenements in England and Scotland. What we want is a true state of the case as to rents, tenures, and modes of getting a livelihood out of the land. Whereas, now we much fear we shall have a rather ponderous eclogue on the excellencies of Irish landlords indited and published by — Irish landlords. But be the result what it may, no legislative enactments on this subject can be of any substantial avail, until peace and confidence have been restored between the now almost severed classes of Irish social life. To any relief that may be proposed for the Irish tenants, cottiers, and farmers, we should remember that, in addition to the reconciling effects of a settlement of the Irish Catholic Church, there would be also the substantial assistance flowing from the many sums of money which then might be turned to improvements or comforts, but which go now to the payment of Church dues and Repeal Rent.

Next comes the Franchise. We are not going

into the vexed question of the Irish Registration, concerning which the members of the present Government now confess the factiousness of their former conduct. But, whatever consideration may be due to the candor of this confession, it is hardly sufficient for Ireland, that upon the strength of it, the Government should, from session to session, neglect to reform a registration which all allow to be inefficient. In fact, this seems to be just one of those cases of admitted abuse which Sir Robert Peel has been talking of reforming for these last ten years, but which he has never yet been so fortunate as to hit upon an opportunity of catching. But in handling it, he must not forget the qualification itself, for so long as Mr. O'Connell can with truth, declare that 680,000 Welchmen have ten or twelve times more agricultural constituents, than 720,000 inhabitants of the county of Cork, and more than seven times as many members; that the West Riding of Yorkshire alone possesses more constituents than the eight principal agricultural counties of Ireland; and that the franchise of Ireland goes on yearly diminishing while that of England and Scotland goes on increasing; * he will, in the

* By a printed return it appears, that the total constituency of Ireland, in 1843, was only 109,945, and that it had decreased since 1837 to the extent of 14,332, being nearly 12 per cent. in six years; while on the contrary, in England, Scotland, and Wales, the constituencies, with the exception of Scotch boroughs, have been and continue steadily increasing.

opinion of all those who honestly supported, or now acquiesce in the principles of the Reform Bill, have a manifest case of abuse; and one, therefore, which so far affords grounds for his complaints of injustice and partiality. In fact, the franchise should not be dependent, as it now is, on a lease to be granted, or more frequently refused, by a superior landlord, who thus establishes, as he fancies, an authority over the vote which it is in his power to create or prevent.

The following tables will throw some light on the subject of representation.

		Members	Electors.	Population.
England	Counties . .	144	435,350	9,115,611
	Boroughs . .	323	301,966	5,879,527
	Universities	4		
Wales	Counties . . .	15	31,898	680,147
	Boroughs . .	14	11,128	231,456
Scotland	Counties . . .	30	41,885	1,367,985
	Boroughs . .	23	30,043	962,199
Ireland	Counties . . .	64	63,389	7,379,583
	Boroughs . .	39	46,556	804,705
	Universities	2		

	Members.	Electors.	Population.	Revenue.
England	571	737,316	14,995,138	
Wales	29	43,026	911,098	£47,402,000
Scotland	53	71,928	2,020,184	
and	105	109,945	8,175,238	£4,102,000

These, then, are amongst the principal subjects

of complaint in Ireland; and we have endeavoured to show, generally, the principle and the practice that should be adopted in their treatment, if we wish to maintain the Union, by that which alone can consolidate it,—mutual good will and fair play. Martial force and coercive laws may enchain the Irish for awhile—perhaps for ever. We may conquer by rousing and letting loose the old Orange spirit of the north, which it was the peaceful triumph of twelve years to allay. We may reinforce it by feeding the national rivalries and sectarian prejudices of England and Scotland; and backing these by a well appointed armed force, and vigilant war administration, we may keep down the Repealers and the Catholics—may make seven millions of fellow creatures, and fellow subjects, fear, obey, and—hate us. But this would be a costly and dangerous process, and interminable; for we should find, *as we have found*, that it was ever to do over and over again—an encore without applause and without a benefit.

But at all events, the ministers themselves know now the dangers, the difficulties and the temper of Ireland, and they have had ample occasions to compare the consequences of their own Irish policy, with that of their predecessors. We do not blame them for pausing last Session. It would have been unwise, suddenly and in the heat of parliamentary warfare to have come forward

with large changes of policy, or even with definite promises. They have taken active and able measures for putting Ireland in a state of undoubted defence, and in so doing they are quite right. For, however willing, nay, anxious we are to concede with frank and open hands to Irish wrongs, and to listen even patiently to Irish invectives, we have no maudlin thoughts of allowing ourselves to be bullied and dictated to as defenceless. Therefore, if Sir Robert Peel and his colleagues, seeing the error of their former ways, will meet Parliament with substantial and comprehensive measures of relief for Ireland, we will forget the past, and join heart and hand in resisting seditious repeal cries. For independent of English interests, we love and value Ireland and the Irish, both Catholic and Protestant, far too well, not to be willing to strain every nerve to avert from them the greater affliction, that repeal would bring to them, than even to us. But if on the other hand ministers meet the coming session, as they closed the last, with their arms raised and their tongues tied, trusting to chance and to force—willing to wound and yet afraid to strike; their rule in this country will be as short as it has hitherto been disastrous.

We have treated of Irish affairs first, both on account of their importance and urgency. Happily the general grievances of the empire are less critical,

and may be less dangerously committed to the wholesome operation of time and public opinion. Still they are very heavy. They may be summed up in one heavy word—PAUPERISM. There is an eating sore of squalid poverty, destitution, and want of employment, spreading and growing into our very vitals, amidst all the glitter, and pomp, and circumstance of extravagant wealth and superabundant production. The two extremes of society are yearly growing wider asunder. In our highly artificial, not to say civilized stage of society, the hideous normal law or curse of mankind, is working its course as palpably as among the American squatters and the red Indians. The powerful and the strong are swallowing up the weak. Every day the great capitalist and the overgrown landlord are amassing, consolidating, joining house to house, laying field to field, and there is none to stay them. The same process is going on through all the links of society successively, until it reaches the very lowest, where it necessarily ends, yielding its additional quota to the already over-full ranks of destitution. But it is only when in excess, that this law becomes ruinous. Under moderate operation it is even advantageous to society by stimulating industry and carefulness, but with us it has grown into a passion for accumulation, a worship of it. A wealthy man now-a-days is ashamed of going into the next world unless he can leave behind him, a million of

money in this. Our institutions associations and habits favour the rich, and therefore accumulation. Our law sanctions and enacts the concentration of wealth. If a man marry without settlements, and die intestate, leaving behind him ten children, and a real estate of ten thousand a year, nine of those children become by the law of the land paupers; they cannot take a single acre, and the one eldest receives the whole ten thousand a year. This is clearly legalizing the principle that wealth should concentrate, not diffuse itself. It can be counteracted only by the special and formal acts of the individual. But the individual has received his bias in favor of concentration from his earliest youth, from example, and from this sanction and tendency of the law. In fact he grows to think all that he leaves to his younger children is so much taken, almost robbed from his eldest son. And so from one generation to another, we grow up unconsciously in an atmosphere of accumulation, habitually worshipping wealth, and almost universally struggling after it, as the one great object of life.

All this creates an increase of and disregard for the poor. The pressing upward causes a shoving downward, so that few, very few rise, while far too many sink. Give to the strongest, is our creed, and its practice is embedded in all our companies, monopolies, privileges and protections. We say, let the class or the individual from rich become

richer, and explain to the many they will gain most by the crumbs that fall from the superabundance of the great one's riches and success. And so the many are overtopped —stifled— pauperized — shut out. For in the glare of an almost incredible national wealth, our institutions, the breadth of our land, our commerce, our manufactures, the handles and staples of our industry, are becoming too narrow for us. We have not room enough. On the one hand, concentration, accumulation, monopoly, protection, call it what you will, shuts out many. On the other, population, moving onwards like fate, and unfolding its ample breast, throws forth every year more and more hands and mouths to be provided for. At the rate of the last ten years, we, in England and Wales alone, are increasing our numbers, at the rate of more than one every third minute,— between three and four-and-twenty in the hour,— 560 in the day,—and above two millions at the end of ten years. And how are all these hungry competitors, constantly crowding upon us, and upon our already redundant pauperism, to be fed and to be employed? Emigration may do something,— nay, much; but it neither can, nor ought, to go to the root of the disease. For we have no hesitation in believing, that, under arrangements and administration, proper to its advanced stage, and its peculiar circumstances and advantages, this country would support a population even much greater than that which it now nearly starves.

Without counting Scotland, or—the hot-bed of pauperism—Ireland, let us remember, nearly a million and a half (1,429,356) paupers received relief in England last year, being an increase of 130,308 above 1841, which increased by 100,000 over 1840. Thus, year by year, is pauperism spreading, and eating inwards and upwards. For just above these increasing paupers, there is, perhaps, a million,—certainly, more than half a million, earning a half-starved existence upon precarious employment, or living by plunder and sin.* Thus, at the lowest calculation, every seventh or eighth individual out of our English population of sixteen millions, is either a pauper, or on the verge of pauperism. Shall we take, as a specimen of our labourers, men of Dorsetshire existing on from five to seven shillings a week, with grown up brothers and sisters, father and mother, all huddled in the same bed-room, with the wind and the rain of winter beating in upon them? Or, under the very eyes of all London, the wretched Bethnal Green population? Or the shilling a dozen makers of shirts? And if we go a little higher than these, the smaller farmers (of South Wales, for instance,) and the little tradesmen, we shall find them struggling hard to beat back poverty and the poor-house from their doors. Even much higher up, there is a

* There were 31,309 committals last year in England, being an increase of nearly 12 per cent. over 1841, which, as in pauperism, increased over 1840.

tension, a pressure, and an over-crowding of every avenue, nay, alley of employment. And yet, at the top all is glitter and gold to satiety. The man of ten thousand a year has the presumption to call himself poor, because he is jostled by others who have their twenty—thirty—forty—fifty—a hundred—a hundred and fifty thousand a year, while above two millions around them in England, and double that number in Ireland and Scotland, are starving, or paupers, or pauperizing.

How long will this continue before it reaches our liberties, our domestic tranquillity, and our financial abilities—until some great convulsion sweep all away—or some practical reform amend it. As clear as the sun at noon day, there must be something radically wrong in the institutions, laws or habits that do not cure even if they do not produce this growing disease. Already there is a sensation of general uneasiness and discontent. Amongst many, it is embodying itself in Chartism, Trades-Unions, Radicalism, Rebeccaism, Leagues, National Association, and Repeal, all in different voices, crying out for the same thing, "Room to live,"—"A fair day's wages, for a fair day's work,"—"And relief from the pressure from above."

For the last ten or twenty years, these voices have made themselves faintly heard, and have, from time to time, been answered by partial reliefs. In 1831, it was thought the great panacea was found,

and the people hailed with universal acclamation, the Reform Bill—as the cure for all evils. They mistook the means for the end, the pump for the water at the bottom of the well. And quarrelling, therefore, with the pump, and with those who made it for them, many went away and would not work it. Consequently, although they obtained some few further organic reforms, with a reduction of taxes,—which, giving a spur to industry, did, for a time, check pauperism, —yet they lost free trade reforms, with the abatement of protections and excessive duties on all articles of prime consumption. Reforms which would, probably, have averted, certainly would have mitigated, the distress and increasing pauperism that returned with the bad seasons of 1839, 1840, and 1841.

We have seen how the Whigs made a bold attempt at national relief, by proposing these reforms, but the country was deceived then, and misunderstood them, allowing the protected and accumulating interests to gain, what they called, a great victory. A victory which has added, and is adding, to the numbers of our paupers and unemployed hands. But public attention is at length roused, and the way to relief having been firmly pointed out, the great victory remains bootless in the hands of those who won it. Their powerful legislative majority is tamed before the enormous numerical majority of want of food, and want of

employment, that is arraying itself against them. They perceive this, and the anti-monopoly cry is forcing a hearing from those who fancied they were met together to crush it. Herein they shew their wisdom and good feeling, and probably, even this Parliament will not close without commencing an unselfish reform of our social laws, and of the partial imposition of our taxes;—releasing trade and industry from all shackles, monopolies, protections, and impositions whatever, except such as are clearly and absolutely necessary for the support of the revenue.

This is the reform and the relief that the country now requires: and this involves all the questions of Corn-Laws, Sugar Duties, Timber Duties, and Tariffs, so reduced as to make this country the quasi free mart of the world, and everything in it as cheap as possible. And to promote so desirable an object, it even would submit to the payment of a substantial property-tax, provided always that it was *justly* apportioned, that is, according to the real and intrinsic value of each man's means.

We are not now going into the Corn-Law, or any other special protection law discussion. We will not even say another word on the preposterous and wicked absurdities of the now almost universally abandoned Sliding-scale. Our war is with the whole system, which is stinting, pauperizing, and demoralizing us—setting class

against class. Even already there are signs of tenants distrusting and severing from their landlords.—Look at Wales, look at the ill concealed alarm shewn by speakers at agricultural meetings, and look at the once more threatening incendiary fires.

But there is one other subject connected with pauperism and the miserable state of our lower orders, Education, which must not be forgotten. The Government must not shelter itself from further efforts by its failure of last session, but instructed and rebuked by its abortive but mischievous attempt to turn so holy a thing as National Education to party and proselyting purposes, it must do its duty, and redeem its error by proposing a sound, practical, and religious education, fit for, and acceptable to, the whole community. And bye and bye, when this has worked its way among rising generations, some of the mischiefs of our pauperism will be abated by the decreasing number of improvident marriages, and by increasing providence and domestic comfort and industry after marriage.

Emigration, too, requires further attention. For, although in 1842 it carried off some 128,000 persons, being about half of the annual increase of our population, yet, in consequence of mismanagement, or misgovernment in the colonies, more than half of this number went not to our own colonies, but to the United States.

Further alterations, too, in the state of our poor,

must be effected by general and scientific sanatory regulations,—by the introduction into our Union Houses, and amongst the poor generally, of a system of rewards,—and the whole theory and practice respecting crime and punishment, require rigid and experienced revision.

But there is one consideration, far above mere party wrangling, and independent of all Governments, but which we cannot resist once more referring to,—and that is, that the people in this country should bestir themselves, and multiply their charity towards the poor, not only by mere generous gifts, but also by all, from the highest to the lowest, giving to them that which is more valuable far,—that which, like mercy, is twice blest,—the comfort and support of their personal intercourse and instruction — visiting, advising, soothing, and making the ignorant, the afflicted, and desolate, feel that they are not despised, comfortless, and alone in the world. Such proceedings would bring together, in mutual pursuits and kindly regards, all classes, and knit together many links that are now dangerously loose. It would be fulfilling, too, a bounden duty, and aid much in wiping off the reproach of above four millions of recorded neglected paupers in Great Britain and Ireland.

All these points bear upon the canker, pauperism; but they are subordinate to the one great question of emancipation from all those protections and restrictions, which by cramping trade, diminish wages,

rendering at the same time food, with all the necessaries and little comforts of life, too expensive because too scarce for the poor.

Of this reform, Lord Spencer, the highest authority on agricultural affairs, referring more especially to free trade in corn, said, lately at Northampton, "*I believe it would be of the most essential importance to the welfare of the country—it would raise the wages and increase the employment of the people.*" And that is precisely what the country wants,—it wants to turn its paupers into independent labourers.

We have now nearly done. We have endeavoured to discuss, with calmness and candour, the present and past state of affairs, and to investigate the effect on them of the principles and practice of the great Whig and Tory parties. We leave the public to draw their own inferences, secure, that facts are stubborn things, and will, in the long run, have their weight. We have shewn what are the principles, and what have been the performances, of the Whigs,—how far they have been consonant to each other,—and how far, agreeing mainly with the desires and wants of the country, they have, when in activity, tranquillized both England and Ireland. We have also shewn what are the principles, and what has been the practice, of the Tories; and how, whenever, more especially of late years, they have attempted to carry their principles into practice, they have produced discontent, sedition, and partial insurrections.

That this is no exaggeration or misstatement, is

proved by the tranquil state of both England and Ireland, for the ten years between 1831 and 1841. And after examining this tranquillizing period, let those who still doubt the results of Tory principles in inactivity, recall the state of England and Ireland in 1829 and 1843, the two extremities of this tranquil Whig period. If for Swing and South England, they read Rebecca and South Wales; if for Catholic Emancipation, Repeal Association; if for Hunt and his associates, they substitute O'Connor and the Chartists; if for broken anti-Catholic pledges, they write, broken pro-Corn Law assurances; and if the *nusquam tuta fides* of 1829, be translated into the almost universal distrust of 1843; what difference will they find between the results of Sir Robert Peel's Government and the Duke of Wellington's, except that the one having risked, gave way, and so preserved Ireland, while the other has as yet only endangered it again.

Like causes produce like effects. Both Governments were ruling contrary to the wants and desires of the people, and singular to say, both were supported by large majorities in the two Houses of Parliament, and were yet in both cases powerless to resist and mischievous in resisting.

We are afraid of being tedious, yet we cannot refrain from carrying on this contrast of Whig tranquillity and Tory disturbance, to a recapitulation of their ministerial performances; and here the two principles of stand still "*stare super antiquas vias*,"

and of advance in their direction, will be still more strongly brought out.

The only Tory Reforms that we have been able of discover after a diligent search through half a century, are the establishment of the London Police, and a formal but useful digest of Criminal Laws in 1827; for both Catholic Emancipation, and the Repeal of Test and Corporation Acts, were forced on and carried by the Whigs against the will of the Tory party. Whereas the Abolition of Slavery—Parliamentary Reform—Municipal Reform—the establishment of National Education in Ireland and its commencement in England—English and Irish Church Reforms—Punishment of Death Reforms—Poor Law Reform—Postage Reform—Law Reforms—Pension List Reforms—Abolition of Sinecures—Diminution of Placemen and Patronage—Reduction of seven millions of Taxes, yet still marking on the whole a balance of surplus revenue over expenditure—and an attempted Taxation Reform, involving the abolition of all monopolies and protections, these sufficiently attest the sincerity and vigor of the Whigs during ten years official application of their principles—and by these the country was tranquillized, for its wants and necessities were consulted and relieved.

There is a just pride in belonging to a party which has effected all these great deeds, as there is shame in having opposed them, one and all, as Sir Robert Peel and most of his followers have done.

But reforms and reductions, such as these, cannot be effected without raising up a whole host of open or secret enemies, amongst the tenants of "vested interests" in abuse, whether in Church or State. The holders of parliamentary nominations—of pluralities—sinecures—places—patronage—protections,—of all those *good* things which were either abolished, or in danger of being abolished under the Whigs, were too happy to undermine them. It is no wonder, therefore, that they were overthrown, and that an interested and malevolent misrepresentation has pursued them. But as time wears on and their successors are tried, consideration reverts from the present to the past. It places the puny performances and mischievous subterfuges of the Tories, issuing in insurrections, most disadvantageously beside the frank and great deeds of the Whigs, which, taking root in the institutions of the empire, bear their goodly fruit in wholesome tranquillity.

And why all this difference: is it that Whigs are so much wiser and better than Tories?—No: but the policy and principles of the one party are in accordance, and of the other in discordance, with the spirit of the age. The progressive party naturally harmonizes and acts easily with a progressive age; whereas the repressive and exclusive—the aristocratic and privileged—even with the best possible intentions, can, in such times, when called upon to act, maintain itself only by masquerading its principles, or by making shipwreck of them, or of its

country's peace. It is necessarily in a state of antagonism.

In the present critical state of the country, there can be no set of men particularly anxious for office. We verily believe that two-thirds of the present Cabinet would give their little fingers to be well out of it. But they have taken their places at the table, they have drawn the corks and they must drink their wine—such as it is. They are ashamed to throw up. They see the dilemma to which they have reduced themselves, their supporters and their country. They find all their policy returned upon their hands, frustrate, or laden with mischief. They see they cannot go on with it—and with a certain degree of manliness they feel ashamed of reversing it. But this cannot be helped; for there is no time to lose in shamefacedness now, while the preservation of the country's peace and prosperity, if not even its integrity, depend on a prompt and clear course. Let them follow it, and fear not. It may, perhaps, be excuseable in some, to have been hurried on by the natural eagerness of party politics, to have credited party accusations, and to have believed in the efficacy of anti-progress, anti-free trade, anti-tolerant principles. It required the putting them into harness, the carrying them into office, to convince them of their mischievous impracticability. They have now been tried by some of the ablest men in the country, supported by the greatest majorities, and found wanting. If they are doggedly

persisted in, until their mischief becomes deep seated and ripe, their abandonment will be impossible without a violent reaction, whereas now nothing irrevocable has been committed on either side. But there must be no longer delay or double-dealing. The way of Free Trade is open before the Government—so is the way of general Education—so is the way of frank and friendly recognition of Ireland's rights and Ireland's religion. The Government has not, as a Government, absolutely compromised itself against any of these active principles—it has stood between them and their opponents, leaning perhaps a little too much the wrong way—but this was natural—was the effect of old habits, and may be retrieved. Let it lean now a little on the other way, and gradually move on in the direction to which it points, and it may find, if all its paths be not pleasantness, that at least its ways are peace. It is morally impossible to go back to old Toryism—it is not practicable to stand still. The ground will slide, is sliding away from those who fancy they are reposing firmly on it. No men, nor party of men, can stand still in the times and circumstances in which we are living. Let the Government then go on—go forward gently, firmly, charitably, justly. And in that case good luck go with it, for in that case we, for our part, will not then disturb it.

But we have our fears. We confess we have slender hopes that Sir Robert Peel and his Government

will take this straightforward course. It is, contrary to the usual bent of his character. Those about him are, with one exception, either expediency men; or those who have shrunk from following out their former Liberal opinions; or old Tories, who make even the smallest advances with wry faces, and only for the sake of their party or their place. His supporters in the country are angry with him, distrust him, and threaten to desert him, so that he has little or nothing to fall back upon. It is therefore most likely that he will endeavour to temporize—to profess much, and to do little—to appear all things to all parties.

But if the Government will not do its duty, what then must be done? Our dangers and difficulties must be met honestly and temperately, by all who wish well for England's prosperity, and Ireland's peace. There are many who will go certain lengths with their party, but who will not suffer matters, for party's sake, to be driven to extremities; and it is for these persons to consider the frightful and dishonoured position of affairs in Ireland, combined with the distress and ignorance in England, testified by insurrections and incendiarism, and the hard sense of injustice taking its stand in vast leagues and counter associations. If they see danger in this state of affairs, let them avert it. They may, in conjunction with the liberal party, assume such an attitude both within Parliament, and outside of Parliament, as by its support may enable, or by its opposition compel the more liberal members of

the Government to amend their proceedings or resign.

We should be sorry to see a resignation. But we would rather see it, than see Ireland exasperated into civil war, or held in military subjection. And if there be a resignation, let us hope there will be energy and good feeling enough amongst the constituencies of England, Ireland, and Scotland, to right the wrongs they themselves have committed, or suffered others to commit. But we are not afraid of such an extremity. Sir Robert Peel has staked his reputation upon this administration, and he will hold fast by it so long as he can; and therefore we think it highly improbable that he will resign. He would rather do justice to Ireland, and follow Free Trade. But, unlike Falstaff, he will not do either of these good deeds, except upon compulsion.

With regard to England we have less fears. It is clear enough what must and what will be done. The great free trade league is confessedly increasing yearly in numbers, funds, discretion, ability, and success. It has all the characteristics of a winner,—of what we are accustomed to call the persevering, straight-forward, business-like, resolute but not violent, Anglo-Saxon blood. And we firmly and conscientiously believe that it has justice and good intentions on its side. If this be so, and it is difficult to deny it, where will Sir Robert Peel find either the ability or the means for permanent resistance. Already there are signs of the times,—of

some pilot-balloons holding out terms,—offering the deeply-pledged Sliding-Scale as a scape-goat. But let the free traders persevere, hold together, and they are sure of success.

But for unhappy Ireland, the prospect is far less clear. The very severity of their wrongs and sufferings, the heritage of a century, has unfortunately, but almost necessarily, put the Irish themselves along with their wrong-doers, in the wrong. And so arming English antipathies against them, for what they do of wrong, they deaden their sympathies with them for what they suffer of wrong. While they are clamouring for what would be injustice and misfortune to themselves—for a Kilkenny war of vengeance upon both England and Ireland —in the mad name of Repeal, there is danger lest the astuteness of Sir Robert Peel turn this against them, and make it a plea with the English for rallying round his government in defence of the integrity of the Empire. But in the name of peace, righteousness, and liberty, let them not fall into this trap; let them remember that nothing but justice and mercy can permanently cure the Repeal madness, though brute force and armed power may for a time bind down its expression, and drive it deeper inwards. Therefore, that which the friends of peace should do, if this or any other appeal be made to them for acquiescence or aid, must be firmly and unitedly to say "First do justice to Ireland."

Finally, then, and summarily, it appears that a Government of repression and exclusion is ill fitted for times of progression and expansion—and that these now require for the peace and well being of the country—

For IRELAND, the support of her tenantry, and the endowment and recognition of her Roman Catholic church.

For ENGLAND, National education.

And for the EMPIRE at large, Free-trade, which includes the relief of her pauperism, by finding increased employment for her increasing hands.

Let who will, do these, but done they must be—sooner or later; and the sooner, the better and the safer.

THE END.

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